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Garrett Biblical Institute

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**IN MEMORIAM**  
**CHARLES JOSEPH LITTLE**



IN MEMORIAM  
CHARLES JOSEPH LITTLE

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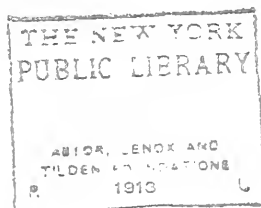
BORN SEPTEMBER 21, 1840

DIED MARCH 11, 1911

EDITED BY  
CHARLES M. STUART



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## BIOGRAPHICAL

1840. September 21. Born at Philadelphia, Pa.
1861. Graduated A. B., from University of Pennsylvania.
1862. Admitted to Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 1862-1867. Served the following pastorates: Newark, Delaware (1862-3); St. James and Spring Garden Street, Philadelphia (1863-5); Springfield, Pa. (1865-6); Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia (1866-7).
1867. Accepts professorship of mathematics in Dickinson Seminary.
- 1869-1872. Studying in Europe.
- 1872-1874. Served as pastor, Christ Church, Philadelphia.
1872. Married Anna Maria Schultze, of Berlin, Prussia.
- 1874-1885. Professor of Philosophy and History in Dickinson College.
1882. Received degree of Doctor of Philosophy from De Pauw University.
1884. Delegate to the Methodist Centennial Conference at Baltimore.
- 1885-1891. Professor of Logic and History in Syracuse University.

1888. Delegate from Philadelphia Conference to General Conference at New York.
- 1891-1911. Professor of Church History in Garrett Biblical Institute.
1892. Delegate from Northern New York Conference to General Conference at Omaha.
1895. Elected to the Presidency of Garrett Biblical Institute.
1896. Delegate from Northern New York Conference to General Conference at Cleveland.
1900. Delivered the Fernley Lecture before the British Wesleyan Conference; Delegate from Rock River Conference to General Conference at Chicago.
1904. Delegate from Rock River Conference to General Conference at Los Angeles.
1908. Delegate from Rock River Conference to General Conference at Baltimore.
1911. March 11. Died suddenly at Evanston, Illinois, from *angina pectoris*.  
March 13. Buried at Rosehill Cemetery, Chicago.  
May 21. Memorial services, Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois.



## THE LAST HOURS

EARLY on Saturday morning, March 11, 1911, it was announced that during the night Dr. Little had succumbed to a sudden assault of angina pectoris and passed out into the unseen. On Friday he was apparently in usual health. He taught with his accustomed vigor and enthusiasm; he took part as his wont was in the chapel exercises of the school; he spoke to the family about his new relish in being able to do his work without the dread of pain to which he had been a martyr for many years; he was in his most engaging mood during the evening, which he spent at the home of his son; and he started for home without sign or premonition of impending death. At eleven o'clock his daughters heard him moan in pain: physicians were instantly summoned, and for a time there was a surcease of acute symptoms. About five o'clock there was a recurrent attack, and before the physicians could reach him again he was gone. During his conscious moments he accepted bravely the rigor of his martyrdom; and the last whispered words were from his Master's parables of watchfulness against the enemy which cometh as a thief in the night. To him God gave the end he had desired; it came without warning, and strength was granted him to meet it without fear and without reproach.

## THE FUNERAL

FUNERAL services were held Monday afternoon, March 13. At the home the Twenty-Third Psalm was read by Professor S. C. Bronson, who also offered prayer. The building of the First Methodist Church being still incomplete, public services were held in the First Presbyterian Church, in the presence of a large congregation, among whom were the faculties and trustees of Garrett Biblical Institute and of Northwestern University, the students from both schools, and representative delegations from the Chicago Preachers' Meeting, the Rock River Conference, the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society, and the theological schools of other denominations in and near Chicago. The active pallbearers were chosen from the different classes in Garrett Biblical Institute; the honorary escort consisted of Mr. Frank P. Crandon, President A. W. Harris, Mr. H. G. Haugan, Mr. William A. Dyche, Mr. James A. Patten, Hon. O. H. Horton.

The company entered the church to the majestic rhythm of Watts' hymn, "O God, our help in ages past," after which the Scripture was read by Dr. T. P. Frost, pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church. A favorite hymn, "Abide with me; fast falls the eventide," was sung by the A Capella Choir of the University, after which Dr. Frost offered prayer. Pro-

fessor Bronson then offered tribute for his colleagues, and Rev. Charles M. Stuart read an intimate appreciation prepared by another who, in virtue of a long and exceptionally close and sympathetic association, was able to present those phases of character which disclose the heart of the man. After a brief prayer the Choral Benediction was sung by the University Choir. The burial was at Rosehill Cemetery, the service being read by Revs. T. P. Frost and C. M. Stuart.



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## FUNERAL SERVICE



## A COLLEAGUE'S APPRECIATION

PROFESSOR SOLON C. BRONSON, D. D.

TO the faculty and students of the Institute the loss of President Little is irreparable. This year will ever remain deeply impressed on the memory of us all. Last year our hearts were filled with forebodings, but we were upheld by the hope, almost the knowledge, of his return to us. But now the end which we call death has come. Between the closing session of one school week and the opening of the next, we must bid him good-by forever and lay him away. We shall not see his face again. His expressive voice, so strangely and interestingly interpreting his thoughts, will no more be heard by us. We must accustom ourselves to his permanent absence. How, we cannot tell.

President Little came to the Institute in his prime, and was enabled to maintain his vigor of mind and heart until the very last. I saw him for the last time a week ago, and then thought that I had never seen him so strong in body nor so buoyant in mind. This, therefore, was Dr. Little's lifework. He regarded it as such. He probably did not desire, certainly never sought, another position as a preference. He loved his work, he loved his school, he loved his students. Dr. Little's recognition by the Church at

large was gained before he came to us, but he greatly increased his fame through service here; and his teachings, and even more, his imperial personality, have stamped hundreds of students who will bear the impress to their very graves. He was by nature and by training a teacher, not after the conventional order, but as himself the seat and center of authority. His profound insight into things, backed by his magnetic personality, never failed to impress his students indelibly. To him was applied, and always with deep conviction of its truth, the term "great." He was great in the eyes of all his students. One of them from an earlier time, a pupil, I think, at Dickinson, when told last Saturday of President Little's death, remarked: "He made upon me in those distant days the deepest impressions of my life." There was no question with anyone as to his supremacy. He was the most versatile man I ever knew. His mind was clear and penetrating. He had a rare quality of interpreting men and events. He saw instantly the involved relations of things, and seemed to have a more comprehensive grasp of world-wide movements than any man I have known.

One needed, however, to come close to him in his suffering to discover other and rarer qualities of character—his patience, his kindliness, his faith. This was to me a new side of his life which was disclosed during the past two years. No word of complaint escaped his lips. His gentleness under pain which must have irritated was marked. His brain, always



tremendously active, now when he was confined by illness expressed itself in great forethought and considerateness for others.

His ideals of the ministry and of what a minister ought to be and do, were the very highest. No one who had come from his classroom could think lightly of the Church, of her mission, or her ministry. For low ideals, or unworthy aims, for indifference or sloth on the part of the minister, he held a justifiable contempt. No incapable man could get encouragement here for his incompetency. But to the man who willed the best, who strove for the best, President Little could point out the way and could inspire him to achievement.

And for the Church he had the highest aims. No man knew her history better than he. No one could thread the courses of her doctrinal streams more surely than he. For the Church's Lord and Master he had unfeigned devotion, and for the Church herself, while frankly condemning anything he thought wrong in spirit or policy, he had the readiest loyalty.

To occupy the position he held as the head of a great theological seminary in such a time as this is both difficult and grave. Never has such light been thrown on the origins or the histories of Christianity. To choose the way amid this confusion, the safe way for students, demands an ability little short of genius. To be true to all that is true and good in the past and to interpret it to, and incorporate it in, the enlarging life and knowledge of the present, and do

this safely for students, is the very highest achievement. And this achievement was President Little's.

The students of the Institute today, and those others of former years who are here, are appalled, and the hundreds of others scattered over the vast fields of the Church will be appalled. But in their tears they bring to his grave the highest admiration for attainment and character, and a love such as the apostle characterized as abiding.

On his companions—the members of the faculty—the blow falls with benumbing force. For the moment we are speechless, for we are leaderless, and our friend is gone. His judgment invariably shaped our own. His voice carried the decision, and this not by sheer force of will but by clearness and pungency of statement. What shall we do now?

And in those other relations of life, the social relations, how commanding his presence! How varied and interesting his knowledge, and all of it apparently at immediate command. How charming and enlightened and enlivening his conversation! We formed a little group of kindred spirits, a harmonious group, each mutually helpful and considerate of the other, and now the circle is rudely broken by death. All of us, with the exception of Professor Terry, have come into the faculty since that circle was broken before. We cannot speak our eulogy today, but we bring our tribute of love, and with bowed heads submit to the divine providence.

It is in hope, however, not despair. A year ago,

I think it was the day before he was taken to the hospital, I held a long conversation with him in regard to the school. He then said that he approached his trial with grave fears as to the issue, but, continued he, "If my time to go has come, Bronson, I am ready for it. I know whither the way leads." Now, at least, he knows that way, and it will be less dreadful for some of the rest of us to follow it now that he has traveled that way.

Dear, kind, forceful teacher, leader, friend, brother, colleague, farewell.

AN INTIMATE APPRECIATION  
BY  
ONE BOUND BY CLOSEST TIES THROUGH  
MANY YEARS  
FROM THE HEART TO THE HEART

ONLY a few weeks ago Dr. Little expressed the wish that when the summons came it might be without warning and that strength would be given him to meet it with a smile upon his lips. God granted his wish. As he lived, so he died, courageously and with unwavering faith in the immanence and goodness of the God whom he served without ceasing.

How poorly mere words describe a life like his! It is written in the hearts and minds of his students, in the love and devotion of his friends; it is woven into the lives of his children.

From early manhood until his death he had but one great ideal, "to do the will of God." He loved his books with an ever-consuming passion, he communed with the noblest minds of all the ages; art, music, and poetry enriched and illumined his soul. But with it all he never faltered in his faith, never ceased striving to make this a better, more beautiful world; never lost his hold on the simple elementary truths by which all men must live.

In boyhood he conquered physical weakness. With

body and mind worn with daily manual toil, by the light of flickering lamp or candle flame he wrested his early education. No man may know, for he never told, the pain, the weariness of each upward step toward the goal of his ambition. He never complained, for the reward was greater than the struggle. Graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1861, debarred because of his frail body from taking part in the war for the preservation of the Union, he gave of his mind and strength to alleviate some of the misery and suffering it entailed. He visited the wounded and dying on the battlefield; he comforted the bereaved and stricken left at home on farm and in village. Astride his horse he rode the circuit like many a noble preacher before him. He loved people and they loved him. And so in early manhood he acquired that deep, intimate knowledge of human nature, its strength, its weaknesses, which in later life gave him the wisdom and the power to help and advise those in need. And all the while his books were his daily companions.

After some years of preaching, fearing that his bodily strength was not sufficient for the life of the pulpit, he determined to become a teacher. He then began the life which with but a short interruption he followed for over forty years.

A teacher, yes, that will be his everlasting glory, a teacher not merely of the letter but also of the spirit, a teacher to whom learning was but an instrument in the fulfillment of man's highest destiny, a teacher who

counted his work vain unless it made his students nobler men and women.

He never lost the keen interest in public affairs acquired in the days of the fierce conflicts preceding the Civil War. Throughout his life he was at times the intimate friend and counselor of men in public life, but he never forgot that, above all things, he was a teacher.

His students idolized him, not merely because he was a brilliant thinker, profound scholar, but also because he was their friend, their helper. Throughout the length and breadth of this land and in foreign lands there are men today who, when they learn of his death, will be bowed down in grief because a loving, helpful friend is gone. Forgotten for the moment will be the thinker, the scholar, the preacher; only the vision of the sympathetic friend will rise before them.

His mind was always a sanctuary for truth; therefore he kept it sweet and pure, firm and strong. He loved the grandeur of the psalmist's tributes to the Almighty, he found his daily guidance in the Sermon on the Mount. He was never unmindful of the problems and perplexities of human life. His active mind was untiring in its endeavor to help men and women solve them, but his inspiration was not in the philosophic speculations and teachings of ancient and modern times, familiar as they were to him, but in what he so often called the "eternal verities." The hard struggle of his early youth, the intense, untiring devotion to his books, the long hours in the

class room, the patient, painstaking labor with which he prepared his sermons and writings, did not chill his love for the fellowship of his friends, did not dispel his delight in the little joys of life. As he grew older his face became more and more effulgent with happiness; he radiated kindness and joy wherever he went. His friends loved him and he loved them. And though one by one they were passing into the beyond before him, his life was not darkened.

When six years ago the brightness of his life was overcast by the death of his wife, he lived all the more in and for his children and grandchildren. How he loved them all and watched over them! To him the word "father" was very sacred. Patiently and with comprehensive wisdom he guided the footsteps of his children through youth to manhood and womanhood. His love for them, his care over them was tireless. Heart and brain were poured out upon them. Now he is gone to his rest, but the memory of his fatherhood will be for them an imperishable source of inspiration and strength.





## MEMORIAL SERVICE



## MEMORIAL ADDRESS FOR THE TRUSTEES

REV. TIMOTHY P. FROST, D. D., LL. D.

FOR several reasons it would seem to be in closer keeping with the eternal harmonies for Dr. Little to be speaking about one of us in a memorial service than for us to be speaking about him. We thought he had other years of efficiency in which to stand as an interpreter between the living and the dead; and he could do it so well. One might almost wish to die, if the president of Garrett were to speak at his funeral or read his obituary. Not that he was ever an unscrupulous or inexact panegyrist. He was constitutionally incapable of that. But, with his ability to discriminate wisely between the things which should die and be buried with one's bones and the things worthy to be immortalized, he could summarize one's life as one would wish to be remembered.

Now he has gone, and we miss a great soul laden with ample stores of assorted knowledge from a thousand fields and throbbing with an abounding intellectual life. It is yet too soon for us to realize that his wealth of accumulation and his captivating power to use that wealth for the good of mankind are no longer available. The world seems to have been despoiled of treasures and energies sorely needed for many days to come. We could have wished for him another ten

years in which to apply those energies to the formulating and vitalizing of his mental stores in literary creations to bless the world after his departure. Only provided that he could have lived on without waning. He was not born to wane. One can think of him as waning energetically, even meteorically, perhaps, but one is baffled in attempting to imagine how he could have waned quietly, not to say contentedly. By the help of God it might have been accomplished, but he was graciously spared that trial.

He had small tolerance for death. Some of us well remember how, at the funeral of a friend two years ago, he exclaimed in an outburst of mingled aversion and defiance: "I hate death." There was nothing theatrical or studied in that utterance. It was a characteristic gleam spontaneously shot forth from the soul of the man. There was in him a militant inevitableness which made him unavoidably dramatic in the utterance of the tragic. And to him, believer in immortality though he was, there could be no death without tragedy. Nevertheless there can be little doubt that he would have preferred death to waning. A somewhat intimate acquaintance with him leads me to think that he dreaded no fate so much as loss of mental grasp and power. For him it was well that he went while the intellectual eye was not dim and the intellectual force was not abated. But, alas, he took so much with him when he went, that we are overwhelmed by a sense of bewilderment in our loss. We cannot quite regain our bearings in all this va-

cancy and silence where a few weeks ago there was fulness and speech.

The well nigh unparalleled fulness and the exceptional speech of the life we miss remind me of the words of Jesus spoken to Pontius Pilate: "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness to the truth." Our friend never would have applied those words to his own life's aim in any such way as to appear for one moment to exalt himself to a place of honor by the side of his Lord. But we may say of him, and we do say of him, that as a follower of his Master "to this end was he born, and for this cause came he into the world that he should bear witness to the truth." And nobly did he fulfill that mission. I speak of him as a witness to the truth. Other than that he was, to be sure, in harmony with that; but to my mind he was no other thing with emphasis so pronounced and with strength so beneficent.

He could be a witness to the truth, first of all, because of his clear vision of the truth. Vision, prophetic in no mean degree, but penetrating and analytic to a degree equalled by few men and probably surpassed by no man in our Church. He looked into the heart of facts, saw them as they were in themselves, and, with his genius for the association of ideas, saw them, not in isolation, but in their relations to a vast number of things in the heavens above and the earth beneath. Some persons are always missing the truth because the facts they see are bare. Others, because they are

strangers to facts in the nude. All their facts are clothed and colored by their imagination. Dr. Little had a well developed sense of discrimination between the fact in itself and the fact as treated by the imagination. Hence he was saved with a great salvation from confusing the objective reality with its subjective embellishments. In his view of the ulterior meanings of facts he looked into the hearts of men. As a lifelong student of men and their deeds he seemed to know most things that men have done, and been, and discovered, and thought, and dreamed. Not only did he see in the dynamic of human motives and the current of human events the things which other observant minds saw, but he was likely also to detect the thing which other minds did not see and to state it with illuminating accuracy and convincing force. The unintelligible world became in part intelligible to him, and all its heavy and weary weight was lightened, by his habit of looking not at the things which are seen and temporal in human movements, but at the things which are not seen and are eternal. He knew much that is in man partly because he knew so much that is in God. Vision of the divine nature gave him hope for human nature. Few persons have seen the evil in human nature and human institutions more vividly than he. An optimist, a superficial optimist at least, he could not be with all this wilderness of defect and sin before him. A pessimist he could not be because he knew God and beheld so much of the eternal purpose in human life. How quickly and puissantly

would he rise to the defence of human hopes—to affirmation of the progress and prediction of the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God when a pessimistic note was sounded in his presence. He carried the ages in his mind. And in that mind they were not without form, and void, with darkness upon the face of the deep. When he said, “Let there be light,” there was light. And when we saw the light of the ages as set in order in that mind, we saw that it was good.


Dr. George Adam Smith has said of writers about the land of Palestine that “some are wearisome and some are vain. They do not give a vision of the land as a whole, nor help you to hear through it the sound of running history.” The man who is laureate in memory today had neither part nor lot with that company. When he took us to any land or age the journey was neither wearisome nor vain, for as he led on we were wont to be charmed by the sound of running history, a sound like the murmuring waters of the river of life. He saw the truth alive, and the living truth begat new life in him. There are men who have accurate and scientifically classified knowledge of the peoples and events of the past, but who treat them as bones, very many, and lo, very dry. But under Dr. Little’s touch they sprang to their feet, energized by the breath of life, an exceeding great army. Moreover his armies were usually on the march, conquering or being conquered. All this was more than mere orderly movement. While his mind was of the com-

manding order, it was also of the fertile kind, bringing forth fruit of itself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. Under the impulse of his thought some things would be marching and other things germinating and growing. As a result, he was a creative conversationalist of the first rank, often quite as fascinating in extemporaneous utterance as in studied address. You were interested in seeing his creations sprouting, budding, blossoming and bearing fruit as he proceeded. So that there were notably two places where his exceptional abilities commanded our admiration and sometimes excited our amazement. One when he developed a great theme on a great occasion; the other when somebody had started up a great theme out of a thicket of commonplaces on a small occasion.

In all this it is evident, of course, that he possessed rare ability for the retention of truth, an ability which occasionally, and for the moment, made us slightly uncomfortable. The tenacity of his memory, working habitually with almost unerring accuracy, could be rather disconcerting. He had a way of remarking in the most incidental manner, "As you once said," following with quotation of words which you had spoken or written years before. You said in your heart, "Oh, that this man would forget a few things." One felt that all the follies of speech ever uttered in his hearing were on record somewhere back of those sparkling eyes. And unquestionably a mar-



vellous record of human follies was there preserved. As I have already intimated, perhaps no man was more familiar with the long story of human mistakes than he. And few men could put the record to better use, not only in correcting errors, but also in demonstrating the progress of thought and action toward the goal of ultimate truth in conception and deed. Though he might be beating up errors, his trail led toward the heights. It was largely his critical knowledge of foibles, failures and the like which made him the skilful pilot he was for those who were sailing on treacherous seas, and the invaluable adviser he was for any poor fellow at his wits' end, wandering amid pitfalls and all sorts of perils. His keen sense of the thing not to do in a perplexing situation made him a helpful counsellor. There was a well-worn path to his door made by those who sought his counsel in matters where their wisdom failed and their heart was troubled and afraid. Of them all, where is the one who would say that the desired counsel was not freely and graciously given, or that in following it he went astray? But by retention of truth I refer to something of greater depth and dignity than mere memory. It is a weakness of many of us that the truth of yesterday is not wholly available for the needs of today, not so much for the reason that we have forgotten the facts of yesterday as that we have slipped a bit from our anchorage in those facts and the truth deduced from them. Dr. Little perpetuated his reliances. By



retaining his masterful grasp of principles associated with their correlated facts he was able to abide in the truth of his yesterdays.

Here was a man who made a man's use of the truth. He never puttered with massive realities, or on the other hand, dealt with small questions as if they were mighty issues. Neither the heroisms nor the heroes of history were paraded for a show, but summoned for the sake of producing new heroisms and new heroes. When Dr. Little brought one of the great men of a former time into your presence as he did an Abraham Lincoln at the centennial in the Presbyterian Church two years ago, you looked with awe upon a man of might, a master of the fateful forces of his age, and yet

“A creature not too bright or good  
For human nature's daily food.”

He could make a great man live before us in a great way and yet in a distinctly human way. Neither his kings nor his kingdoms came for purposes of observation alone, but chiefly for the promotion of the valor of righteousness. In the processes of his thought pageants might be created and move before us in superb array, but not for the sake of the pageant. Rather for the sake of a cause. His presidency of this Institute came in a period when some things were being shaken, even to the point of being removed, in the theological world. From the beginning it was his steadfast purpose, frequently avowed in these later

years at least, to maintain a mediating attitude in the fields of biblical and theological controversy—so far as such an attitude could be maintained in the interests of truth and not at all at the expense of truth. Who that knew the man and his work would deny either that he was exceptionally equipped for such a task or that he carried out his purpose with consummate skill? It would hardly be too much to claim for him that no scholar of our time could preserve his balance amid jostling theories with surer poise or less hostile attack. In an age of religious shift and drift he endeavored to hold people to confidence in the truth and keep them steady on secure foundations. Faith, though weak as a bruised reed, was not broken by his utterances in pulpit or in private. True, the faith of some who sat at the feet of this teacher might be intelligently changed, but it was not unsettled. Furthermore, the truth which he declared to others was of supreme use to him in times of personal crisis. When death, his hated foe, smote his beloved he endured as seeing him who is invisible, the Abolisher of death. When, after a long struggle with disease, he came to the ordeal which put his life in the balance, his spirit was calm in the assurance that he had not followed cunningly devised fables, but had built on everlasting foundations in holding to the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints.

But after all, I think that greater than any of these qualities which I have mentioned was his passion for truth. I mean far more than that his spirit

was eager in its quest and aglow in its contemplation, although nothing truer than that could be said. But beyond that he was passionately insistent upon loyalty to truth. He was valiant for the truth upon the earth; an ardent champion of sincerity, the indignant foe of every species of lie. You well know that his light was not without heat. There were times when it seemed as if the elements of his nature must melt with fervent heat. His passion for truth was so intense that he could be almost fierce in its expression, and altogether belligerent in its defense. His heart burned within him in holy aversion to a sham. He had no patience with ecclesiastical intrigue, no mercy on pious finesse for unworthy ends. Fine scorn had he for the creature who pares his manhood to gain a place. So exacting were his standards of purity and righteousness that nothing vile dared reveal its foulness in his presence. So keen was his perception of the unworthy and so hot his indignation against every taint and trace of meanness that to some persons his judgments seemed at times to be severe. They were ready to exclaim, "Oh, the goodness and the severity of this man!" But if goodness is not to be flabby it must at some points be severe.

During the years of his presidency in this place what went ye out for to see? A scholar? Yea, I say unto you, and more than a scholar. It has been of inestimable value to Garrett Biblical Institute, to the Methodist Episcopal Church and to the Kingdom of God, to have had at the head of this school and in the

highest councils of the church this clear-headed and true-hearted witness to the truth—this man of stern and unwavering loyalty to the truth in his personal life—this man who would not justify in any minister of the gospel from theological student to general superintendent the least conscious divergence from the truth in character or act.

## MEMORIAL ADDRESS

PROFESSOR MILTON S. TERRY, D. D., LL. D.

THE ability, scholarship, learning and various accomplishments of our distinguished colleague and president have commanded the admiration of every member of the faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute. Meeting him as we have done day after day through many years in the usual routine of our work of ministerial training, we could not but observe and appreciate his splendid gifts, and his superior equipment for the work of a teacher in a school like ours.

Charles Joseph Little was so fortunately born as to inherit sundry advantages not allotted to many. I may be somewhat prejudiced in favor of the old time claims of elementary classical training, namely, that the finer culture of the intellect and of nice distinctions of thought is more effectually secured by the discipline of linguistic studies than in other ways. One who is an easy master in the command of sententious and powerful expressions of thought must be deeply versed in the subtilities of human speech. Happy is he who, by his early familiarity with several different tongues, inherits intuitively a practical science of language. Who can estimate or analyze the fine acuteness of mental grasp most naturally secured by one who grows up in the ready but half uncon-

scious use of two or more languages? To such superior elementary advantages our friend added early in life a personal delight in reading many books of solid value. The completion of his college course at the age of twenty-one is a witness of his educational attainments at a time when a collegiate training was not as common as it is today.

A young man of such exceptional gifts and attainments could not long be kept in the pastorate. It seems a great pity that such a statement is true unto this day. Dr. Little was richly endowed to serve as an ideal preacher and pastor, and he lacked no ability for becoming an able leader in any church, or conference, or in any one of the great religious bodies of our land. But other fields, supposedly more difficult to fill, were calling for him. We have only to name Dickinson Seminary, Dickinson College, Syracuse University and Garrett Biblical Institute to be impressed with the extent and character of his work in the fields of higher education. His remarkable versatility is shown by his apparently equal readiness to occupy the chair of mathematics, or of logic, or of philosophy, or of history. He might also have accepted on short notice the professorship of Greek, or of Latin, or of German, or of French, or of Italian, in any institution of our country. What a splendid success he would have been in a chair of the English language and literature! His varied studies and observations in Europe added to the encyclopædic fulness of his acquisitions.

I can never forget two impromptu addresses made by Dr. Little within a month of his death, one before the Chicago Methodist Preachers' Meeting, and the other at the last banquet of the Garrett alumni, both of which were, in my judgment, equal to anything I ever heard from his lips. On both occasions the burden of his heart was to point out the purpose and the limits of a theological school, and the delicacy of handling the peculiar problems of modern critical thought. He exposed the error of some who imagine that a school like ours ought to be a kind of social and religious university, enlarging its curriculum so as to include an indefinite number of studies in addition to those which years and years of experience have found to be fundamental and essential to the highest ministerial training. With the clear vision of a Christian statesman he showed the impracticable character of such enlargements of the work of a school founded for a definite and necessarily limited purpose, and with a class of students already overtaxed with tasks of prime importance.

He also exposed the ignorance and the narrowness of hasty talkers who go about declaring that our schools of theology are nurseries of skepticism and unbelief. The questions of modern critical thought are thrust upon the attention of our schools, whether we will or not. Our students bring these questions with them from their homes, from the high schools, from the academies and colleges, and they ask us to help them solve their doubt and queries. However



they originated, these critical problems are to be found today in the daily newspaper, in the popular magazines, in the great cyclopædias, in the dictionaries of the Bible, and in all modern commentaries on the Scriptures. Doctor Little pointed out with great force and clearness that there can be no honest treatment of either Catholic or Protestant Modernism except by the authority of convincing argument. His deep studies in history and philosophy made him suspicious of the moral soundness of a man who clamors for the infallibility of external authority rather than that of self-evidencing truth. He sought rather to magnify the personal responsibility of conscientious effort in proving all things and holding fast that which is demonstrably good. And I think he had no sympathy with the crab-cry "Back to Christ;" he would rather have us say, with all possible emphasis, "Forward with Christ." We cannot ignore or forget our glorious inheritance from former revelations, but ours also is Heaven's last great gift, the Comforter divine. The work of the Spirit of truth is to "abide with us and to guide us into all the truth." Filled with this illuminating Spirit and girded with his gifts of power, we may, like Jesus himself, say, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." The vision of the Christly soul is not so much a backward look as a looking forward for fuller and deeper disclosures of the true Light of the world. When that great Light is shining on our way, a bigoted or a stupid looking backward may result in our becoming something even more pitiable

than a pillar of salt. We must, however, look in many ways and from many points of view in order to obtain the fuller vision of the truths of God in Christ. Such in substance and logic, not, of course, in words, was the purport of the two addresses—probably the last public speeches of his life.

There have been many expressions of regret that a man of such extraordinary acquirements should have left so little in a written form. His Fernley Lecture, his volume entitled "The Angel in the Flame," and numerous Review articles and published addresses evince his transcendent ability as a thinker and writer. They set us meditating what he might have done. Some of us used to admonish him of this, and he was wont to answer, "Oh, Jesus didn't write any books." But it was answered, Paul did write, and so did Augustine, and Luther, and Bunyan, and Wesley and Jonathan Edwards. Let one read Dr. Little's address at the Baltimore Centennial of 1884, or that given at the semi-centennial of this Institute in 1905, and if he have any spiritual penetration, he will see behind those utterances a mighty angel all aflame, and wish that he had, in written form, many another message from the same burning source.

Though seemingly snatched away from us before his time, and leaving a vacancy no other man can fill, his end was a euthanasia such as he himself might well have wished. His last meeting with our faculty was just after our regular chapel service, when we lingered a short time here on this platform to trans-

act some business that required immediate attention. Cheerful and serene in spirit, he parted from us and went his homeward way. He spent the pleasant evening hours among those most near and dear to him on earth, and at the dawn of the morning following he was not, for God had taken him.

We all know how he loved the great German poets, and how familiar he was with them. The first time I ever heard him lecture he spoke in highest terms of Goethe's "Faust," and extolled particularly what he called its "inimitable dedication." I have often recalled his manner and his words on that occasion, and found myself repeating over and over the first line of Bayard Taylor's German tribute to Goethe prefixed to his translation of the Faust. How appropriately it might now be addressed to our exalted friend!

*"Erhabener Geist, im Geisterreich verloren!"*

Imitating it somewhat, may I not speak for all of you and say: "O rare and regal spirit, lost from our vision in the spirit world, thou canst never be forgotten. In the mists of the morning thou didst ascend into the opening heavens, and long will thy devoted pupils gaze after thee and cry, 'My father, my father, the chariot of Israel.' Angels about the tree of life had need of thee in the Paradise of God. Caught up into those holy heavens, thou wilt yet speak to us below, and our lives henceforth shall be richer for memories of thee."

## MEMORIAL ADDRESS FOR THE ALUMNI

REV. JOHN THOMPSON, CLASS OF 1899.

DOCTOR PATTEN, in his opening prayer of holy meditation before God, said, "Our friend comes not with us to the festivities of the week." But my memory has been wonderfully vitalized in the midst of these surroundings and I feel the Doctor's spirit is hovering near. I put the trumpet to my imagination and I can hear him read from this Bible and lead us in prayer and lecture in that room; I can see him going through these halls and down the campus toward his home. It is all so real he cannot be far away from us at this hour, and in speaking for the Alumni I bring a heart's tribute to the memory of him whom I loved as a friend, trusted as a counselor, and revered as a teacher.

Having known professors in the old land, it was interesting to me to study the type of man elected to the presidency of a theological seminary of the Methodists of this great new country. As students in the class rooms we sat as so many living cameras on which impressions were projected. In Dr. Little's room I was first of all impressed with his unique and dynamic personality. All personalities are unique, here there are no duplicates, souls have no doubles. We are all originals. But his was an unusually

striking and masterful personality. Scientists assure us that the shadow of a bird's wing, or of a passing cloud falling on a bed of flowers, will permanently affect their fragrance and beauty; and Peter's shadow was thought to possess magical influence, so the people brought their sick that his shadow might fall on them. If physical shadows have effects on life, who can measure the influence of this strong personality on the life of the students? This great teacher's face was ever toward the light, and as we followed him his shadow fell on us, and what student's life was not thus made richer, stronger, fuller? The height of the mountain, the depth of sea, the speed of the wind, the bulk of the planets, and the pressure of the atmosphere can be measured, but the influence of his personality cannot be known till the books are opened and the chronicles of souls are read.

The second impression came from his extraordinary versatility. He was the fullest man I ever met. The fulness of his knowledge was a constant marvel to all who knew him.

In the days when I was deciding which theological school to attend, an alumnus of Garrett said, "Go to Garrett and if you get nothing more than what comes from Doctor Little in the 'asides' of his class hours you will be amply compensated." I am sure every member of the Alumni who had the privilege of his classes could make such affirmation today. Those hours when in response to questions the fountains of

his knowledge were opened, can never be forgotten. We felt that if there was any theme on which he could not talk intelligently for an hour, that theme had not yet been discovered. He created the atmosphere in which we saw the facts and movements of history. He opened up to us the avenues of knowledge and gave the soul a mighty impulse in search for truth. He was a superb pollenizer of others' minds. It has been said here today that he wrote few books, and we all wish he had written more books—but he did write on the imperishable tablets of the souls of his students and helped to make their lives cornucopias of blessing.

\* Another impression came from his magnificent capacity for indignation. He had no patience with laziness and he hated shams with a burning hate. It seemed sometimes as if he would explode when he discovered evidences of insincerity and indifference on the part of a student. We all knew what it meant when such an one was called into his office after class hour, and were not surprised if later we saw the delinquent leaving the campus in company with the expressman who was taking his belongings to the depot. He could be piously impatient, righteously indignant and religiously angry with the drone and the sham, but he was always a judicious encourager of students making honest, earnest, successful effort to achieve. He had no patience with such carelessness in the mastery of dates as led to the mixing up of unborn babes and dead men. Dates were to

him the bolts which held history together, and he insisted on their being correctly fixed in the mind.

He taught us how to grasp the underlying philosophy in any movement in history and to distinguish between the men on the crest of the wave in any movement and the men who made the wave possible. Indifference in such vital matters never failed to arouse his displeasure, but when he saw a student had learned to focus facts and events his joy was very manifest. Not more delighted is the gardener when he sees the green blade and the bud appear, or the mother when she sees the mind of her babe opening to its environment, than was this noble teacher when he saw assiduity and progress in his students. But woe to the sham who scamped his work; he was sure to be the victim of bloodless decapitation when the doctor's impatience was kindled but a little. He had no patience with frivolous disputation and any student who entered into this would find himself the subject of nerveless dentistry.

But the deepest impressions came from Doctor Little's religious life. He was a profoundly reverent man. All truth to him was sacred and all life religious and related to God. We can never forget how reverently he spoke of God and of the deep things of the religious life. When he was led aside from the assigned lesson and talked about Christian experience, what hours they were Watts' lines would come into the mind as we left the room.

"I have been there and still would go,  
'Tis like a little heaven below."

He could lift us clear above the foothills into the atmosphere of the spiritual.

Pardon me a more directly personal word here. We each passed under the rod and our homes were broken by the bereavement that splits the life in two. His loss came a little before mine, and in the dark days when I was relaying the foundations of my faith I went to him and found this strong, dynamic personality quivering with sensitiveness and truest sympathy. He was to me then as the shadow of a great rock in the day of fierce heat. The cedar diffuses its fragrance after it is dead, and the light of stars that have long years ago passed beyond the range of the telescope is still falling on us; so the shadow of his personality and the influence of his life work will abide with us in all the years to come.

"Can that man be dead

Whose spiritual influence is upon his kind?

He lives in glory; and such speaking dust

Has more of life than half its breathing moulds."

Farewell, beloved friend, noble Christian, revered teacher, till the shadows flee away and we meet thee in the land where the light abides and darkness never falls.



## MEMORIAL ADDRESS

MR. FRANK P. CRANDON

THE several addresses to which we have just listened have so admirably and so adequately referred to the various relations which Dr. Little sustained to Garrett Biblical Institute, its plans, its work, its history and its hopes, that further reference to them would be devoid of interest. The three minutes which have been allotted to me will be devoted to a consideration of the Doctor's personal qualities and services. I expect to keep within the assigned limits, although no amount of time, nor an ability which I possess, would enable me to give appropriate expression to the estimate in which Dr. Little was held by all of the members of the Institute community.

Although he was for a long time, the "President of Garrett," the title by which he is known is altogether insufficient to indicate either the extent or the quality of his services to the institution, his relation to his associates, or his interest in them and the results of their work. To the Board of Trustees, he was a veritable *Fidus Achates*, in whose wisdom as well as whose fidelity they were accustomed to confide; to his associates in the faculty, he was both an inspiration and a support. They gladly joined him in his plans for the development of the work of the school, and

he shared with them fully the burdens which they had jointly assumed, and to the students and the alumni he was ever the sympathetic director, the inspirational teacher, almost a paternal counsellor whose interest in them was not only continuous through the years of their academic experience, but followed them to their various fields of labor and remained with them as a continuing benediction.

In what phrase shall I speak of one who was our guide and counsellor, mentor and teacher, to the young men almost a father, and to all of us, altogether a friend!

The addresses which we have heard have caused us to realize as never before the irreparable loss, which, in the death of President Little, Garrett has sustained, and how grievously the institution and its friends have been stricken. Referring to this affliction, a friend recently said to me: "I try to believe and I do believe, that somewhere the Great Master has a more important work for President Little than he was doing here, but where it is, or what it can be, I do not and I cannot understand." In our affliction we remind ourselves that these issues are in the care of Him who sees the end from the beginning, and who guides and controls the affairs both of this world and the world that is to come. In His wisdom and goodness is our trust, for we know that "He doeth all things well."

No form of words can give expression to what the presence and personality of Dr. Little meant to Gar-

rett Biblical Institute. In an important sense he was the inspiration and guide of its activities, the director of its energies, its faithful friend when obstacles lay in the path of its achievements, its able and efficient defender when its plans or its teachings were assailed. Under such a leadership, difficulties vanished and success was assured.

His equipment for the great office which he so ably administered was unique and comprehensive. His varied and extensive learning, his eloquence, his almost unequalled power of statement, the accuracy of his information, his experience in administration and in dealing with men and with affairs, and that peculiar personality which compelled the admiration and co-operation of those who came under his influence, were the elements of a splendid leadership, and secured to him the confidence and the loyalty of all who knew him.

No estimate of Dr. Little is adequate or comprehensive that does not take ample account of his broad and generous sympathies and his capacity for genuine and enduring friendships. Like his Master, he was willing to spend and be spent for the suffering and the afflicted. His heart and his intellect were fashioned in the same mold. His friendships knew no boundaries or limitations.

Most thoroughly do I appreciate the compliment of an invitation to participate in these commemorative services. The part which has been assigned to me is not difficult or conspicuous, but the opportunity to

bear public testimony to the noble qualities of my friend is an inexpressible privilege.

It is fitting that in this enduring form, the name and memory of so great a man should be perpetuated, but those of us who knew Dr. Little need no monument or token to remind us of him or of his great qualities of mind and heart. These have been graven with the pencil of love in memories that will endure forever. They are as imperishable as eternity.

But that those who in the coming years shall frequent these halls may know of him, may learn about him, and be inspired by memories of his life, his character and work, a tablet has been prepared which bears his name and an inscription which is worthy of him and of which he is worthy.

This tablet it is my privilege to unveil and in so doing there is presented for your approval a name which all shall honor, a memory that all will cherish.

## RESOLUTIONS AND TRIBUTES



## THE TRUSTEES OF GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE

WHEN in the early morning of March 11, 1911, death claimed President Little as its victim, the event was so sudden, so unexpected, and so seemingly disastrous to the plans and hopes of the institution of which he was the beloved and honored chief, that its announcement could scarcely be realized or credited, either by his faculty associates or his most intimate companions and friends.

Only recently he had returned from a protracted vacation, which a serious surgical operation had rendered necessary, but from the effects of which he was understood to have entirely recovered. With his old-time vigor and enthusiasm, he had reassumed his administrative and educational labors and responsibilities. His presence in the halls of the Institute, on the campus and in the classrooms, had given a new zest to all the life and work and activities of Garrett, and under the inspiration of his vigorous administration, everyone joined to welcome a future for Garrett brighter than any which the institution had previously known.

Almost instantaneously and without warning, this fair prospect was dispelled. The leader, whom all delighted to follow, was stricken, and the blow fell

with a benumbing weight on students, faculty, trustees and friends of the Institute. Twenty years of his forceful, active, commanding personality had been woven into the history and achievements of Garrett, and when with a startling suddenness we were told that he had passed away, the very foundations of the institution seemed to be shaken, and for a moment the effect was overwhelming and the loss apparently irreparable.

So intimately were we accustomed to associate the individuality of President Little with all of Garrett's interests when thinking about either of them, that if the possibility of their separation had ever suggested itself, it was dismissed as being a contingency so remote that its consideration was easily and instinctively postponed.

The administration of President Little had been coincident with the period of the Institute's greatest prosperity.

In all the departments, notable advancement was everywhere in evidence. Important additions had been made to the faculty. A library of almost inestimable value, and of a quality so unique that its duplication is impossible, had been collected and adequately housed. While in many theological schools the attendance had so dwindled as to occasion serious concern, and great anxiety was felt as to the sources of supply for the future demands of the ministerial profession, the student body of Garrett



had been greatly increased and its quality was a source of constantly increasing gratification. Its alumni were found scattered throughout the various Methodist Conferences, and doing service in every mission field of the church—even in the most remote places of the earth. Under the shaping hand of a great teacher, these men had been well equipped for usefulness and responsibility. They were animated by a spirit similar to his own, and they shared in his devotion to the great work to which he and they had been called. They were inspired by his courage, cheered by his example and emulated his consecration to the cause in which they were enlisted. Through this body of earnest, loyal followers, many of the splendid qualities of a great master are being reproduced and multiplied wherever the work of Methodism is being carried on.

Few men in the history of the church have come to their work with so rich an endowment as that which was possessed by Dr. Little. His mental operations were rapid and his memory phenomenally retentive. His perceptions were clear, accurate and comprehensive. Intuitively he detected whatever of error was contained in any proposition that he was called upon to consider. His logic was resistless, and whether it was employed to support a worthy cause, or to expose a false or fraudulent claim, it was equally potent when used either as a weapon of attack or defense. These qualities rendered him formidable as

an antagonist and invaluable as an ally in any contest or debate.

His preaching was eloquent, inspiring, instructive, and convincing. Whatever the theme of his discourse, its treatment was sure to be novel and its presentation to bear the impress of his own mental characteristics. His conclusions were inevitable deductions from the various propositions which had been under discussion, and which seemed to have been so adequately established that controversy concerning them had been eliminated.

He was a brilliant essayist. Many of his papers which he had read before various literary and scientific societies displayed a wealth of learning, a comprehensive knowledge of his subject, a clearness of statement and an elegance of diction rarely equaled in any literature. It is doubtful if Methodism has ever known a man of more brilliant attainments, or of greater intellectual power.

His qualities of mind and heart rendered him most delightful as a companion and invaluable as a friend. In the social circle he was incomparable. Wit, humor, anecdote and repartee seemed to be his natural environment, while his gentle and kindly consideration for others rendered him equally the friend and companion of children, and the admired guest of grave and reverend men. The friendships of such a man must be like himself: generous, firm, enduring, unselfish, pure. Fortunate indeed were those who enjoyed such a relationship to him.

Altogether apart from his charming personal qualities, the Board of Garrett Trustees had through many years learned to so confide in his judgment, and to so trust his advice and skill in all matters of administration, that his sudden removal created a situation too difficult to be easily comprehended. We could only realize that we had been overtaken by a great calamity.

Certain problems, which at one time it was feared might in a measure imperil some of the interests of the institution, had been grappled with and had been satisfactorily solved. The clouds had rolled away, and as we looked to the future, the promise it presented was, that,

“Tomorrow shall be as this day  
And much more abundant.”

For that future we had planned not only hopefully but generously. In all these plans, Dr. Little was the central and controlling personality. Now in an instant he was taken from us, and to the question “On whom will his mantle fall?” and “Who is sufficient for these things?” there came no ready response.

Even in this extremity, in the presence of so great a sorrow and affliction, we remind ourselves that Garrett and all of its related interests are under the guardianship of a Providence whose wisdom is unerring and whose protective care is equal to every emergency. In this hour of supreme trial when heart

and flesh failed us, we looked upward asking for that divine assistance which would enable us to say—"O Lord, Thy will be done,"

T. P. FROST,  
F. P. CRANDON,  
Committee.

## THE FACULTY OF GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE

THE faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute, with a profound sense of personal bereavement and of irreparable loss, record the death of Charles Joseph Little, our honored and beloved President and Professor of Historical Theology. No calamity would seem for the present to be more grievous. Suddenly has the strong man fallen; the idolized teacher has ceased to speak; the powerful, captivating spirit has vanished, called away at the breaking of the day.

Our Institute has, for twenty years past, been honored and adorned with the ripe fruitage of this inestimable life. Dr. Little became our professor of historical theology in 1891, and president in 1895. Both as teacher and as president he magnified his office. His colleagues in the faculty can never forget his many kindly words, his tender sympathy, his deference to the feelings and the judgment of his brethren. We grieve that we shall see his face no more among us here. We record with affection and pride his early academic and collegiate training, his later studies in this country and in Europe, his double birthright of American and German opportunities, his superior attainments, especially in history, in philosophy and in logic, his wonderful command of

English expression, and his rare power of dramatic presentation. The greater part of his life was spent in the work of higher education, and his services in Dickinson College and in Syracuse University were a splendid preparation for his crowning work in Evans-ton. The class room was the throne of his greatest efficiency, and there was his transcendent and magnetic personality often seen at its best. How striking his epigrammatic phrases! How vivid and lastingly impressive his outlines of the mighty movements of human life! And yet how careful was he to ascertain the real facts of history and to warn against the danger of hasty conclusions! How conspicuous his ability and skill in setting forth the essential facts in such bold outline as to be clearly distinguished from any complex background of minor details! His off-hand and seemingly careless manner of portraying a great person or event often made the effect more thrilling; and his hearer, whether a regular student or an occasional visitor, might easily forget that he was in a class room.

His public addresses commanded exceptional attention. In his sermons and lectures he excelled in constructive thought, in broad generalization, in his pointed and forceful statements, in elegance of diction, in penetrating insight. He was a recognized power in our greatest deliberative assemblies, a profound logician, a strong debater, quick to perceive and expose fallacies, and a master in his grasp of the vital issues of a controversy.

And now he has quietly fallen on sleep at the goodly age of three score years and ten. His departure from us in the calm morning hour, after his usual week of toil and a peaceful evening with his beloved children, was a remarkable enthanasia. He has made and he leaves upon this entire community and upon the whole broad Church he loved, an indelible impression. And he will live on in the affectionate memory of numberless pupils, now scattered over the wide world, and continue to speak through them to generations following.

For the Faculty:

M. S. TERRY.

## THE STUDENTS OF GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE

IT was with a sense of great loss that the news of the death of our beloved president, Dr. Little, came to the students of Garrett Biblical Institute: the loss of an example of true Christian manhood, of a sympathetic friend and adviser, of a scholar and teacher, who first of all taught the way of life.

No person could long be with Dr. Little without feeling that he was in the presence of a man of God. He made the Christ live anew in his deeds and words. The fragrance of his life has brought new devotion to many a heart. When he spoke of Christ, it was as of one whom he knew through a rich personal experience; the Scriptures burned with a new fervor because they were animated by his life. He made one feel the greatness of the kingdom of God, and a desire to be a part in its coming among men.

Only when all things are revealed will we know how many persons have been helped by his friendly and Christian sympathy. No one knows the number of disheartened students he has cheered on in their work, the many to whom the proper training for the work of the Christian ministry would have been impossible were it not that he proved himself a friend. But we have all known and felt that Dr.



Little was a friend truly great and in deep sympathy with us who are preparing for the work of the Master.

As a teacher we have never felt that he was desirous of leading us to any private belief or doctrine. The glitter of the new or the antiquity of the old were not elements of value to him. His great test was the reality in fact and in experience. He was devoted to the truth and sought to instil a like devotion in the minds of his students. And all truth, of whatever realm, was made to contribute its light, and to reveal the glory of the One who declares Himself to be "the way, the truth and the life."

With the host of friends, with the Church at large, with scholars and educators, and with all men who feel that in the translation of Dr. Little they have lost an eminent contemporary and friend, the student body of Garrett Biblical Institute earnestly unites in expressing its sympathy to the bereaved family.

## BOARD OF VISITORS

It was with a keen sense of irreparable loss that we read last March of the sudden death of President Little, for while many men exert great influence for good, few there are whose horizon of usefulness broadens throughout Christendom.

Dr. Little, the true and the good, the scholar and the thinker, the counsellor and administrator, the preacher and teacher, was one of those rare souls in the church of God. He was not only the president of Garrett: he was one of the foremost leaders of the Kingdom of Christ in America.

In his preaching, moral and emotional intensity filled analytical and rhetorical ability with power.

As a teacher, his encyclopedic mind was joined with a personality alert and progressive, and above all devoted to sincerity and truth. His scorn of hypocrisy and sham all but consumed him, and made those qualities as impossible in those around him as gossamer threads in furnace flame.

Representing thirty Conferences, we record our high appreciation of his invaluable services, not only to our own church, but to the Kingdom of our Lord everywhere, and while we mourn his loss, we rejoice in the deathless influence for righteousness living in his disciples.

EARL W. HOLTZ.

W. F. HOVIS.

E. C. DIXON.

## TRUSTEES AND FACULTY, NORWEGIAN-DANISH THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

IN a joint meeting of the Faculty and the Board of Trustees of the Norwegian-Danish Theological Seminary of this city the following resolution was adopted, viz.:

Whereas, The Reverend Charles Joseph Little, Ph. D., D. D., LL.D., President of Garrett Biblical Institute, has passed from his grand and faithful work in the Church Militant to the fellowship of the Church Triumphant, and

Whereas, We recognized in him a man of unusual devotion, profound spirituality, and the most genial brotherliness, because of which his translation is felt as a distinct personal bereavement; and

Whereas, President Little has shown a genuine interest in our Norwegian-Danish missionary work generally and a special interest in our theological seminary—not only on account of his residence among us as a great savant and educator, but more especially on account of his knowledge of our language and literature, being a constant reader of our classics and also of our church organ, “Den Kristelige Talsmand”; besides having a thorough understanding of our national and church history, which enabled him with his broad Christian sympathy to show continually in words and deeds that he understood the peculiar difficulties of our Foreign Mission and appreciated

our work as a branch of the great Methodist Episcopal Church, which he loved and served so eminently and loyally up to the very last day of his earthly life; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we, the Faculty and School Board of the Norwegian-Danish Theological Seminary, assembled in Evanston, Ill., this 13th day of March, 1911, do sincerely deplore our loss and record our esteem for this man of God and conspicuous servant of the church.

That we express our brotherly Christian sympathy with the bereaved family and assure them of our deep and lasting affection, not only for their own sake, but because of the veneration in which we held their honored head.

That a copy of this resolution be preserved in the archives of this seminary, and that we instruct our secretary to forward a copy of the same to the family of our departed friend, brother and benefactor.

For the Faculty and School Board,	
NEIS. E. SIMONSEN,	J. O. HALL,
<i>Chairman.</i>	<i>Secretary.</i>

THE FACULTY, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS,  
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

AT the regular meeting of the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts, Tuesday, March 21, on motion of Professor Amos W. Patten, the following resolutions on the passing of Dr. Little were adopted by unanimous and standing vote:

Whereas, Charles Joseph Little, D. D., LL.D., S. T. D., President of Garrett Biblical Institute, has passed to his eternal rest, therefore,

Resolved, That we, the faculty of the College of Liberal Arts of Northwestern University, do hereby express our sense of the profound loss which we have sustained in the removal from among us of this distinguished scholar and educator.

As preacher, professor, author, historical investigator, leader in theological instruction; as a far-seeing student of literature and philosophy; as a thinker of wide vision and deep conviction; as a prominent figure in the councils of the church, he has made an enduring mark upon his age.

His departure takes from us a broad-minded citizen, a wise counsellor, a loyal friend and a devoted servant of God.

Resolved, That we extend to the faculty of Garrett Biblical Institute our deepest sympathy in the sad

bereavement which has come to them in the sudden departure of President Little.

Resolved, That this minute be placed upon our records and that a copy thereof be transmitted to the bereaved family.

## FIRST ITALIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, CHICAGO

WHEREAS, it has pleased Almighty God in His infinite wisdom to call unto Himself His faithful servant, Professor Charles J. Little; and

Whereas, with his death, Methodism has lost one of its greatest leaders and our church a father; and

Whereas, during his life, and more especially in these latter years, he loved and admired our mother-country, Italy, expressing this love and admiration in particularly caring for and advocating the cause of our struggling congregation, giving it the aid, indorsement and encouragement essential to its reaching the solid basis on which it now stands, and by attracting to us through his powerful personality the interest not only of his family but of all whom he knew; and

Whereas, Dr. Little graciously held the presidency of our Board of Trustees, giving liberally time and advice and taking upon himself even financial burdens; and

Whereas, still fresh in our hearts is the memory of his devotion to us and to this cause; therefore

We, the members of the First Italian Methodist Episcopal Church of Chicago, Illinois, wishing to perpetuate this memory during this memorial service,

Resolve that the expressions of our deep sympathy

in this hour of sorrow be presented by our pastor to the family of Dr. Charles J. Little ;

That a life-size photograph enlargement of Dr. Little be provided and placed in an adequate and central position, with a bronze inscription attached, in the side chapel, and that said chapel henceforth be known as the "Charles Joseph Little Memorial Chapel."

Signed   PIERO M. PETACCI.  
          ALFONSO DE SALVIO.



## CHICAGO HOME MISSIONARY AND CHURCH EXTENSION SOCIETY

THE Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society desires to record its sense of loss in the death of the Rev. Dr. Charles J. Little, president of Garrett Biblical Institute, who passed away after a few hours' illness on Saturday morning, March 11, 1911.

Dr. Little's official connection with the work of the society dates from 1897, when he appears as a member of the Executive Committee. From that time until his death he was deeply and intelligently interested in the various enterprises founded and fostered by the Society. His enthusiasm was especially drawn to the experiment embodied in the organization of the Northwest Federation and the movement by which a beautiful house of worship was secured for the Italian colony.

Dr. Little brought to the councils of the Society an engaging earnestness and an inspiring zeal for the spread of the Kingdom. His fine intellectual gifts and rich and varied learning; his breadth of outlook and spiritual intensity; his eager and robust faith and ardent apostleship in its behalf; his passion for righteousness in the smallest details of conduct and his instant impatience with sham and unreality of

every sort—all contributed to a personality at once forceful and compelling. The memory of his noble and urgent life, of his stainless character, and of his manifold labors of love, will be cherished by the Society among the treasures which it holds most sacred, to be recalled always with deepest reverence and affection.

## THE FACULTY, McCORMICK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE Faculty of McCormick Theological Seminary have heard with deep sorrow of the death of President C. J. Little, D. D., LL.D. We extend to you our heartfelt sympathy in this loss, which will be felt not only by you as a seminary but by your entire church as well.

The twenty years of service which he has given to you has impressed us all with the strength of his personality and we have shared with you in deep regard for Dr. Little and high estimation of his abilities.

In social and institutional relations he combined rare geniality with a spirit of friendliness, fairness and comity, and it was always a pleasure to meet him in those gatherings of our theological faculties where we sought to develop and emphasize our common brotherhood and unity of purpose.

As a professor in a sister institution we admired him for his administrative capacity, for his scholarship, his breadth of vision, the clearness of his intellect and the eloquence of his words. He was the vigorous opponent of all that puts shackles on men's consciences or lives, a Protestant in sentiment and action.

And now in sorrow we would bring this tribute to his grave and this token of sympathy to your hearts. May the Gospel of the Resurrection and the Life which he preached be your consolation in this hour, and as you are assured that with his own eyes he now looks upon his Redeemer, may you take up anew with courage and with faith the duties and the trust which the great Head of the Church has given into your keeping.

## TRIBUTES

*Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J.*

His wisdom in administration, his choice scholarship, his power as a preacher, his consecrated life, his great services to ministerial education have left an impress that cannot be effaced.

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*The Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, O.*

He was a man with a broad vision and hundreds of our ministers who passed through his classes will look to him with gratitude and mourn his death as a deep personal loss.

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*The Christian Advocate, New York.*

He . . . had many talents and also a strain of genius. The amount of his knowledge was marvelous . . . his accomplishments were unusual in their number and scope. . . . As a prose writer he excelled. . . . As an orator he exceeded most public speakers in reading his orations. . . . Held by his manuscript, he, by its contents, held silent and intent all classes of hearers. . . . In his classes he was absorbing and instructive. . . . He was profoundly religious after his own manner; and, if necessary, would have been burned to death rather than recant his spiritual vows. His religion was neither pharisaical nor fanatical; often of the spirit of the hermit, and again longing for society and brotherhood, he was in all things *himself*.

*The Michigan Christian Advocate, Detroit, Mich.*

President Little was one of the few really great men in Methodism. . . . Though somewhat reserved, he was a man of genial personality and a loyal and faithful servant of the church.

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*The Pittsburg Christian Advocate, Pittsburg, Pa.*

Dr. Little was one of the strong men of the church, a real prince in our Israel, and a veritable pillar of American Methodism. He was a thorough and ripe scholar and a writer who wielded a trenchant pen. He had very clear insight, intense and positive convictions and yet broad and sane views. He was a sage counselor.

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*The Central Christian Advocate, Kansas City, Mo.*

Dr. Charles J. Little was an upland son. There was nothing ordinary in his structure. He was intense; he was brilliant; he was conscientious to the point of aloofness; he was a poet in the structure of his thoughts; he was universal in his knowledge; he vitalized what he taught until it was all alive, vascular, intense, dramatic and picturesque. He was a great scholar. He was a great preacher. He was a prophet.

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*The Northwestern Christian Advocate, Chicago.*

To comprehensive learning, exact scholarship, and peerless gifts of exposition, Dr. Little added in his teaching a contagious enthusiasm which begot in the

dullest new and unforgettable desires for ampler knowledge of the revelations of God in His word and in human history. Nor were his students ever allowed to forget that the distinguishing badge of the scholar is his sympathy with the problems of human life and his subordination of gifts and acquisitions to the supreme obligation of human helpfulness. Dr. Little was himself a noble illustration of this.

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*The Rev. Bishop Henry W. Warren.*

Dr. Little was a true type of a versatile American Christian. . . . Notwithstanding his versatility he was thorough in all his work. . . . He has added to the mental and spiritual life of millions.

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*The Rev. Bishop Willard F. Mallalieu.*

He had many traits of character that constituted the highest types of manhood, brotherhood, Christ-likeness. He was brave, transparently pure, honest, kindly, considerate of others, conscientious, a candid truth teller, a lover of mankind, a loyal Methodist, and an humble, faithful follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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*The Rev. Bishop Joseph F. Berry.*

He was strong, clear, independent and forceful in his leadership in any body of men.

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*The Rev. Bishop William A. Quayle.*

He was master of a strong, prose style, had penetra-

tive power of historical criticism, and a fine gift for character analysis.

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*The Rev. Bishop David H. Moore.*

There were few such scholars in Methodism.

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*The Rev. Bishop John H. Vincent.*

His long and wide experience as a man among men, as a preacher, as a professor, as a lecturer, as a genial and attractive member of the social circle, as a traveler, and as a close and critical observer, gave him a world not only to live in but to command at will and to command for the delight and profit of his hearers and associates.

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*The Rev. Bishop John M. Walden.*

Our church is richer because of his life and work and will long be indebted to him for the real impulse he has given to the loyal study of modest but mighty Methodist leaders.

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*The Rev. Bishop Eugene R. Hendrix.*

Versatile, devout, courageous, he will long be remembered as a master of assemblies, honored and loved by all the churches.

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*The Rev. Professor Henry C. Sheldon, Boston University School of Theology.*

By virtue of his rare combination of scholarship, literary gifts, administrative talent and religious en-



thusiasm, President Little was a man of marked distinction.

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*The Rev. Professor William F. Warren, Boston University School of Theology.*

President Little reminded me of Wilbur Fisk in New England. Nothing higher can be said.

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*The Rev. Professor Henry A. Buttz, Drew Theological Seminary.*

It was in the work of ministerial education . . . that he rendered his last and probably his greatest service. He brought to his educational task an equipment of ability and training rarely equaled, and his influence upon the students will abide.

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*The Rev. Professor D. W. C. Huntington, Nebraska Wesleyan University.*

So clear and clean in thought, devout in spirit, loyal to the truth and never wanting in courage which led him to be true to his convictions.

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*President Herbert Welch, Ohio Wesleyan University.*

He was, perhaps, the ripest scholar of our church—a man of prodigious learning, yet master of his knowledge . . . of elegant culture, yet of practical force . . . an educator and statesman of rare quality.

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*President William E. Huntington, Boston University.*

President Little represented the best type of Chris-

tian scholarship. Of wide learning, he was consecrated to the work of a religious teacher. Through his books he sent out to the world the results of his best thinking by gifted powers of utterance.

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*President Eugene A. Noble, Goucher College.*

President Little was a man of penetration, independence, frankness, consistency and reverence. His beliefs were grounded in righteousness and were expressed with enthusiasm. He admired men of worth and honored honest effort.

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*President Harris Franklin Rall, Iliff School of Theology.*

The theologian is popularly regarded as the man of the closet and a dweller in the past. President Little was more than either; he knew and loved the Methodism of the past, but he saw its tasks in the present. He saw the true Wesley and high succession in the spirit of huge service of Christianity and of Methodism in our modern social problems.

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*President Harry Pratt Judson, the University of Chicago.*

All Christian churches owe his name reverence.

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*The Rev. Professor Andrew C. Zenos, McCormick Theological Seminary (Presbyterian).*

He was a man of charming character, of great learning, earnest and devoted spirit.

*Professor George B. Foster, the University of Chicago.*

His earnestness and seriousness did not keep him from being kind, nor his sanity from being young and optimistic.

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*Professor Ira M. Price, the University of Chicago.*

President Little was a broad-minded, positive, forceful Christian scholar, a warm-hearted, sympathetic counselor and friend.

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*Paul Carus, Editor The Open Court.*

Faithful to the traditions of his church, yet open-minded to scientific truth, President Little was a noble type of the modern theologian and educator.

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*The Rev. Professor Graham Taylor, the Chicago Commons.*

Alert in intellect, devout in spirit and catholic in fellowship, Dr. Little served his Church best by serving the Kingdom most.

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*Nolan R. Best, Editor The Continent.*

I always admired him for the breadth of view and catholicity of understanding which made him sympathetic with both the progressive and conservative elements of Christian thought.

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*Mrs. George H. Parkinson.*

May not the hundreds of ministers' wives who are Garrett women have a word spoken for them? We

were conscious of his sympathy, of his belief in the influence of a consecrated parsonage home; and because of him many of us are truer and stronger.

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*President George Edward Reed, Dickinson College.*

He left a deep and abiding impression as scholar, orator, teacher, preacher and man of affairs.

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*President Ozora S. Davis, Chicago Theological Seminary.*

President Little was one of God's great men with the gentle spirit of a little child. His scholarship was almost inexhaustible, yet he knew how to take his hearers with him into the pleasant paths of learning as well as to lift them to the heights.

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*President Abram W. Harris, Northwestern University.*

The Methodist Church has had no greater scholar. To an exact and deep knowledge in the department of learning which he made his special field he added a wide and discriminating knowledge in many fields, particularly those fields that especially deal with the humanities. . . . In public address he had gifts that justly claim for him rank with the great orators of the Church. In his private relations, as in his public interests, he was human and treasured the regard and affection of his friends.

*The Rev. Professor Milton S. Terry, Garrett Biblical Institute.*

Splendidly equipped . . . a master in history, philosophy and logic, a preacher and teacher of transcendent power, he has long commanded general admiration.. His students fairly idolized him.

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*The Rev. Professor Solon C. Bronson, Garrett Biblical Institute.*

One needed to come close to him in his suffering, however, to discover the still, rare qualities of character, his patience, his kindliness, his faith.

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*The Rev. Professor Doremus A. Hayes, Garrett Biblical Institute.*

Our president was a genius in the class room. He was an inexhaustible fountain of information. . . . He made the impression of encyclopædic knowledge available at a moment's notice. He was our sage, our oracle, our final authority. . . . He was a master among masters.

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*The Rev. Professor F. C. Eiselen, Garrett Biblical Institute.*

Wonderful was his ability to hold an audience spellbound by the knowledge of his theme. His eloquence and perfect mastery of English were a rare combination in one man. He was an inspiring teacher, and to have accomplished what he did, often

handicapped by ill health, revealed the irresistible power of the spirit over the flesh.

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*The Rev. Professor William J. Davidson, Garrett  
Biblical Institute.*

As a preacher he combined great intellectual ideals with an unique evangelical fervor in such a way as to make him in his prime a pulpit orator of thrilling and glorious power. He had a marvelous knowledge of the Holy Scriptures in both the English and the original tongues and also a rare sense of their right pedagogical and homiletical use.

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*The Methodist Ministerial Association, Spokane,  
Washington.*

His eminence as a scholar, theologian, preacher, writer and teacher made him universally recognized; while his scholarly ability tempered by a loving Christian spirit endeared him to all students.

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*Southern California Methodist Ministers' Association,  
Los Angeles, California.*

Our theological school at Evanston and the larger learning everywhere is bereaved in the passing of a potent leadership. Methodist ministers literally in thousands at home and abroad have felt the spell of his mastery. The highest councils of the Church have often followed his wisdom. Civic affairs, philanthropic enterprise, the betterment of social conditions and the gospel evangel in all the earth have lost a most wise and loving friend.

**PAPERS AND ADDRESSES**  
**BY**  
**CHARLES J. LITTLE**





## METHODIST PIONEERS AND THEIR WORK\*

AMERICAN life is a distinct historical product, as sharply differentiated from English and European life as was the Hellenic life of twenty-five centuries ago from the Mediterranean and Aryan life out of which it emerged. Now, sharply defined, historical products are never the outcome of deliberately conscious human energy. On the contrary, every city, every epoch, every nation, is the result of individual impulses and intentions, which are fused into a great social enterprise by forces other and more than human. And what is true of any epoch or nation is true of any one of its constitutive elements, whether political, intellectual, or spiritual. Methodism as an organization, or Methodism as a living energy in American life, has come to be what it is, not because the character of the nineteenth century was forecast by the Methodists of the eighteenth, and all their efforts directed by some master human hand to the realization of such vivid forecast, but because the Methodists of the eighteenth century wrought in the eighteenth century according to the impulses and

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\* A paper presented to the Centennial Methodist Conference at Baltimore, Md., December 13, 1884.

instincts of their redeemed natures, according to their judgment of the needs of the hour, leaving the nineteenth century to take care of itself, or, rather, to be taken care of by Him who is from everlasting to everlasting. Absorbed as they were in the value of the individual soul, their imaginations were not kindled by any dreams of ecclesiastical empire; pictures of modern Methodist edifices, or of modern Methodist audiences, could have yielded them no inspiration. They believed, and therefore they spoke; they had souls to take care of, and they cared for them by the best methods which their intellects could devise. Leaving to God the business of opening doors, and accepting for themselves the humbler business of entering such doors as he might open, enabled the Methodist pioneers, as it enables all the elect of God, to do a work of whose importance and magnitude the furthest-sighted of them all had only faint and uncertain glimpses.

When Philip Embury and Robert Strawbridge were thinking and praying about leaving Ireland, Captain Thomas Webb, his right arm wounded, his right eye gone, his great commander dead upon the field of glory, was returning to England from the heights of Abraham, which his valor had helped to win. Quebec was taken in 1759. With its capture, and the destruction of Pontiac a few years later, passed away forever the French dominion beyond the Alleghany Mountains. Frederick County, Maryland, where Strawbridge settled, was upon the frontier when he

settled at Sam's Creek. Beyond it, westward, were a few forts, the Indians, and the wilderness. Little did he dream, when he erected the log meeting-house in which his little Society of twelve or fifteen might worship, of the vast flood of human beings which was soon to pour across the mountains that separated them from the vast tracts which Wolfe and his army had won for the English colonists. Little did he dream, when he sung with that sweet voice of his the first Methodist hymns to his few neighbors, of the vast throngs which would re-echo them, in future years, from the yet unpeopled wilderness.

Just as little did Philip Embury foresee, as he sailed up New York harbor in 1760, the Brooklyn Bridge swinging aloft above the activities, the charities, the prayers, the crimes of two millions of human beings, for the New York of his day had only twenty thousand inhabitants.

Quebec fell in 1759, and with it French dominion in the West. The Stamp Act was passed in 1765; its passage determined the independence of the English colonies in America. The Methodist Societies of 1766 were to be cradled amidst the excitements of the Revolution, but the little company upon the Maryland frontier, the larger company which listened to Embury in the rigging-loft of New York, even fiery Captain Webb, with his "Whitefieldian declamation," were too intent upon saving their neighbors' souls to be busied with forecasts of coming political changes. Unconscious of the future, save in a larger

sense, these three—Strawbridge, moved by his own fervor; Embury, aroused from his torpor by the spiritual energy of Barbara Heck; Webb, following the impulses of a heart whose natural fire the Holy Spirit had kindled to a pure white glow—founded the early Societies of Maryland, New York and Pennsylvania. Alike only in their devotion to their Master and their readiness for sacrifice, each is a striking personality.

Strawbridge was an Irishman from County Leitrim, poor, adventurous, courageous, and full of zeal; "a stout, heavy man, who looked as if he was built for service;" a charming companion, with his countrymen's gift of persuasive speech and a touch of their unthrift. But his neighbors loved him, and not only hastened to his hymns and sermons, but farmed his land during his absence, that others, too, might listen to his sweet voice. A licensed local preacher only, he traveled through Maryland, was the first Methodist preacher to gather converts in Virginia, held meetings in the house of Martin Boehm, in Pennsylvania, and sung the hymns of Wesley in Delaware and Jersey. Asbury's stern notice of his death is, rightly interpreted, a striking tribute to the influence and power of Robert Strawbridge. Grimly severe, unlovely in its harshness, it shows how Strawbridge's unyielding opposition had jarred upon the great commander. Asbury was himself capable of what, to an imperiously honest nature, are the greatest of all sacrifices—the sacrifice of

honest conviction, of cherished habits, of action, of slowly matured purposes, when required in the interests of harmony. Quietly submitting himself to so much that he did not approve, the insubordination, even of those whose views he shared, could never attract his sympathy. But Strawbridge was right in his contention. All conjectures of what might have been are full of peril, yet one is fain to ask whether Asbury's own lot, and the lot of all native Methodist preachers during the Revolution, might not have been much easier had Strawbridge prevailed in the sacramental controversy, even at the risk of a break with Mr. Wesley.

Philip Embury, though, like Strawbridge, born in Ireland, inherited the nature of his German parents, who were fugitives from the Palatinate. Born in 1730, converted in his twenty-second year, he arrived in New York in 1760, a skillful carpenter, who could readily find work in the growing seaport. He was a quiet, unaggressive man, not without gifts, fearful, earnest, with depths of perseverance in him, when his soul began to flow out in speech and work under the influence of his passionate and energetic cousin, Barbara Heck. Building with his own hand the pulpit from which he preached in old John Street Chapel, within two years of its consecration in 1768 he saw around him a thousand of the twenty thousand people who then resided in New York. From New York City he removed to Washington County. Here he became preacher and magistrate among his

new neighbors, and organized a Methodist Society, of which he was the leader until his sudden death in 1775. Embury's efforts in New York, originated by Barbara Heck, were stimulated, quickened, driven onward to marvelous success by the presence of Captain Thomas Webb. This soldier of King George and King Jesus enters the early history of American Methodism like the blast of a trumpet. From the hour that he announces himself to the half-frightened company at Embury's house as "soldier of the cross and a spiritual son of John Wesley," a new energy stirs the little flock. The man, described by John Adams as "one of the most eloquent men he ever heard," was no mean preacher. Yet in the prime of life, for he was but forty-two years of age, his noble mien, his commanding voice, the fire of his one unshaded eye were only indications of a soul large, generous, fearless, indomitable. He gave of his eloquence, he gave of his money; he wrote to England, imploring the help of Mr. Wesley, under whose preaching he had been converted, and by whom he had been licensed to preach; he traveled to Philadelphia, and begged for money to eke out his own liberal donation. He sold religious books, and gave the profit for the debt of the Church; preaching wherever he went. He passed through New Jersey. He was the founder of Methodism in Philadelphia, and gave of his money to help buy St. George's Church. He established a Society in Long Island, and preached in Delaware as early as 1769. At a later period he

was in Baltimore. Upon his return from England, in 1773, he brought with him Shadford and Rankin, as missionaries, the latter to superintend the Societies in America. But before this Pillmoor and Boardman, Williams, Wright, and Asbury had already come over in response to his urgent appeals for help. The Revolutionary troubles breaking out, he returned to England, where he continued to preach with power until his death, in 1796.

How sharply contrasted are these three men! The impetuous, but sweet-voiced Strawbridge; the diffident, tearful Embury; the fiery, energetic, strong-voiced, large-hearted Webb! They may be called the pioneer founders of American Methodism. They came to America, not as missionaries, but two of them to seek a living, and a third in the service of his king. Their religious activity was the necessary outcome of their religious experience and the spiritual destitution of their neighbors. Untrained, though not illiterate, they demonstrated once more the contagious character of earnest conviction, the diffusive nature of living faith. Seizing upon the truths which were *livable*, they preached them in the light of their own experience. Their speech was what spiritual speech always should be, the mere overflow of a well of living water which was in them to everlasting life.

Let me next speak of the Wesleyan missionaries. Richard Boardman and Joseph Pillmoor were sent from England in 1769; Richard Wright and Francis Asbury in 1771. Thomas Rankin and George Shad-

ford came over with Captain Webb in 1773; Robert Williams and John King were not sent over, but came of their own accord, both of them in 1769. Williams was an Irishman; Rankin was a Scotchman; the others were English. They were all young men—Pillmoor, the oldest, being thirty-five; Asbury, the youngest, but twenty-six. Pillmoor had been educated at Kingswood school; the others, King excepted, had no such training. Williams was madly in earnest; King was blunt, simple, courageous; Boardman was “pious, good-natured, sensible, greatly beloved by all who knew him;” Pillmoor was Yorkshire-built in body and character, intrepid, eloquent, full of unction and of power; Rankin austere earnest, untiring in his devotion to his Master, but without unusual gifts of mind or character.

Shadford was serious, pathetic, full of Scripture and the Holy Ghost. Pillmoor became in latter years rector of St. Paul’s Church, Philadelphia, where he died in 1825. Williams, King, and Asbury died in America, as Methodist preachers. Boardman, Wright, Rankin, and Shadford left America when the troubles of the American Revolution thickened about them, and never returned, though Shadford, who was the last to leave, parted from Asbury in tears, and was long remembered by the older American Methodists.

The position of an English Wesleyan in America, from 1770 to 1784, was one of peculiar embarrassment and peril. Loyal to his king, he was still more loyal to Mr. Wesley; and when the latter pronounced



disloyalty a sin, his American missionaries were in sore straits indeed. Asbury, whose reticence was sometimes carried to the verge of unwisdom, secretly sympathized with the colonists, but held his peace and declined to take the Maryland oath.

Nothing but the amazing fortitude and dauntless courage of the native preachers saved American Methodism in this trying hour. Held accountable for Mr. Wesley's opinion, and for the conduct of any who might claim to be Methodist preachers, to be a Methodist was to excite suspicion and provoke persecution. Garrettson nearly killed, Hartly whipped and imprisoned, Caleb Peddicord beaten and injured for life, Forrest and Wren committed to jail—neither stripes nor bonds could reach the souls of these intrepid men. They were not of their time, because they were above their time. If their passion for independence was less vehement than that of others, it was because they were anxious to see men freed from the bondage of a tyrant more terrible than King George or Parliament—to break the fetters of a slavery of which all political slavery is but a consequence.

Asbury was forced to seek the shelter of Judge White's, in Delaware; and not until John Dickinson gave him a letter of commendation to the governor of Maryland did he resume his work within the borders. Upon the coming of Coke and Whatcoat in 1784, he alone remained of those who had come from England;

he, when the storm subsided, was here to hold the faithful band together.

So much will be said of Asbury during these sittings that I am tempted to utter no word of this extraordinary man. Yet who can pass his form in silence? He had a robust figure, a face of blended sweetness and severity, an eye that saw far more than it revealed, a voice steadied by an iron will, but tremulous with feelings that sometimes shook his soul as a reed is shaken by the wind. He had none of Williams' wild earnestness; he was without the charm of Strawbridge or the gentle harmlessness of Richard Whatcoat. He had not the thorough humanness of Jesse Lee, nor the mystical tenderness and strength of Freeborn Garrettson.

“Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;  
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea;  
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,  
So didst thou travel on life's common way  
In cheerful godliness, and yet thy heart  
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.”

He had refused to live in cities, and by his ceaseless movements kept alive the arterial system of early Methodism. How different were the men who fell into each other's arms at Barrett's Chapel on the 14th of November, 1784—Thomas Coke, the only child of a wealthy house, and Francis Asbury, the only son of an English gardener! The one an Oxford grad-

uate; the other the self-taught scholar of a frontier world. Coke, impulsive, fluent, rhetorical; Asbury, reticent, pithy, of few words, but mighty in speech when stirred by a great theme, a great occasion, or the inrushings of the Holy Spirit. Coke's mind was as mobile as his character was stable. Asbury's conclusions matured of themselves, and, once formed, were as steadfast as his love for Christ. Coke could never separate himself wholly from England; Asbury could never separate himself from America. Coke crossed the Atlantic eighteen times; Asbury never crossed it but once, not even to see his aged mother, for whose comfort he would have sold his last shirt and parted with his last dollar. Coke founded missions in the West Indies, in Africa, in Asia, in England, in Wales, in Ireland; Asbury took one continent for his own, and left the impress of his colossal nature upon every community within its borders. Coke was rich, and gave generously of his abundance; out of his poverty Asbury supported his aged parents, smoothed the declining years of the widow of John Dickins, helped the poor encountered on his ceaseless journeys, and at last gave to the Church the legacies intended for his comfort by loving friends. Coke was twice married; Asbury refused to bind a woman\* to his life of sacrifice, and the man whom little children ran to kiss and hug was buried in a childless grave. Both

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\*“And because,” he writes to his mother, “of what happened to me when I was in England.” I would give much to know what it was.

were loved; both were at times misunderstood; both were sharply dealt with by some of their dearest friends; but Asbury was not only opposed and rebuked, he was vilified and traduced. Neither shrank from danger or from hardships; but Asbury's life was continuous hardship, until at last rest itself could yield him no repose. A sort of spiritual Cromwell, compelling obedience at every cost to himself as well as others, Asbury could have broken his mother's heart to serve the cause for which he died daily. Coke lies buried beneath the waves he crossed so often; but around the tomb of Asbury beat continually the surges of an ever-increasing human life whose endless agitations shall feel, until the end of time, the shapings of his invisible, immortal hand.

Of Whatcoat, of Vasey, I will not speak; a few words only of John Dickins, the first book agent, and the projector of the first Methodist college. To Robert Williams is due the credit of printing the first Methodist books; but Mr. Wesley was unwilling that any books of his should be sold for private gains, and Williams' enterprise was brought to a speedy end. Dickins, at great financial sacrifice, managed the book-room, which was established in Philadelphia in 1789, with skill and success, and died there of yellow fever in 1798. English born, an Eton scholar, he came early to America, and joined the itinerants in 1777. When the fever came to Philadelphia, he wrote to Asbury, "From the jaws of death," stating his determination not to flee the city.

“For piety, probity, profitable preaching, holy living, Christian education for his children, secret closet prayer,” writes Bishop Asbury, “I doubt whether his superior is to be found either in Europe or America.”

I come now to speak of the native preachers, the men who were born and began their itinerant life in America. These men defy classification; again and again I have tried to reduce them to groups, and failed utterly. And herein lies one glory of the early American pioneers—they were individual almost to uniqueness. This was partly due to the fact that they were the first fruits of a new country. The European in America who survived the desperate struggle for existence into which he had ventured was in nearly every case a man of hardy frame and robust nature. His children, surrounded by circumstances so unlike those of the Old World, developed characteristics rarely to be met with among the children of long-settled countries.

The inner nature, untrammelled by the pressure of convention, had free course to follow its native tendencies, whether good or bad. When, therefore, the light of God fell upon the souls of these Americans, it flashed back upon the faces of their neighbors an ever fresh but always radiant surprise.

How different is William Watters, the first native American itinerant, from Benjamin Abbott, whom Asbury looked upon as an itinerant miracle! How striking the difference between the corpse-like face

of John Tunnell, through which gleamed, when preaching, the coming of the splendors of another world, and the manly features of Jesse Lee, radiant with health and exuberant physical energy! Who can listen, with Thomas Ware, to the song of Caleb Peddicord,

“I can not, I can not forbear  
These passionate longings for home;  
O when shall my spirit be there?  
O when will the messenger come?”

without a heavenly homesickness that brings tears to his eyes and dissolves for the time all charms of earthly things?

How different are Garrettson's steel-like courage, his invincible gentleness, his almost open visions of God's will, from the rough soldier energy and the soldier speech of Joseph Everett, over which flowed the transfiguring beauty of a quenchless love for souls. Or, contrast the concentrated intensity of Russel Bigelow, which, like electric fire, consumed into thin vapor all material hindrances that impeded the passage of his soul to the minds and hearts of his listeners, with the many-sided power of William Beauchamp,\* editor, lawyer, mechanic, statesman, preacher, almost bishop. Nay, even the comet of the itinerant system, the man

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\* I am indebted to Rev. Aaron Wood, of Indiana, who married a daughter of William Beauchamp, for the assurance that the family pronounced the name Beecham.

who was never exactly in and never entirely out, Lorenzo Dow, and the lost star which went out in blackness of darkness, whom I will not name, were men of unique and powerful character.

The Methodist pioneers were itinerants in the true sense of the term. They were not confined to the state lines or narrow conference boundaries. Modern Methodism is a group of united ganglia, through which there is no such continuous circulation as made the vascular system of early Methodism a thing of wonder and of power. Appointments were for large tracts and for small periods—a pioneer might, in three years, have preached in twice as many states. Watters preached in Virginia, in Maryland, his native state, and in New Jersey. Philip Gatch, also a Marylander, preached in Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, New Jersey, and Ohio, where, Judge McLean says, he laid the foundation of Methodism in the West. Garrettson traveled through Maryland, his native state, through Virginia, through Nova Scotia, New England, and New York. Moriarty was in Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, and Connecticut. Jesse Lee took all New England for his parish, which included the then unbroken forests of the province of Maine, besides traveling with Asbury throughout the Southern states. Hope Hull, another son of Maryland, went to South Carolina in 1786, to Virginia in 1787 to Georgia in 1788, to Connecticut in 1792, and back to Georgia in 1793. Thomas Ware, who was born in New Jersey, traveled through his

native state; thence to Delaware; was afterwards on Long Island, and in 1817 volunteered to go with Tunnell to what is now east Tennessee. Valentine Cook, who, though not a native, began his itinerant life in Maryland, preached in eastern and western Pennsylvania, in Ohio and Kentucky. Beauchamp began to preach between the south branches of the Potomac, was stationed at Boston, edited the *Christian Monitor*, the first Methodist newspaper, at Chillicothe, Ohio, founded Mt. Carmel, Ill., was stationed afterwards at St. Louis, and died while presiding elder in Indiana.

The American pioneers were, in the language of Freeborn Garrettson, *thrust out* into the ministry, thrust out by inner compulsion and the insistence of the people. Doubtless there were weaker spirits who were swept into the work by transient excitement; but these soon fell back before the difficulties which confronted and attacked them; for the difficulties of this early work were active as well as passive. I can find but few of whom I am not persuaded they set out deliberately to have a hard time.

Their difficulties were both physical and moral. The eastern shore of Maryland is to this day overhung with malaria; but in those days such was the condition of much of the country through which they were compelled to travel. Good roads in America were rare, rivers were plenty, fords were few; of bridges there were hardly any. Coke was nearly drowned; but nearly every itinerant could tell his story of



floods and swamps and nights in the forest, where God gave his beloved sleep in spite of screaming wild-cats and howling wolves. The cabins where they could lodge were few, some of them with the latch-string pulled in, some of them the resorts of horse-thieves and desperadoes. Beyond the Alleghanies the Indian prowled with wolf-like ferocity, sparing neither sex nor age. The rude hospitality of the settler was given by a warm heart, but often with dirty hands. The rough blanket which was laid over the itinerant sleeper was sometimes biting with vermin or the worst forms of cutaneous disease. Often he was hungry, sometimes asking a blessing upon a crust of bread, sometimes days without so much as that. Asbury's meager pittance of sixty-four dollars a year, one cent a mile for six thousand miles, to say nothing of the preaching, was a fair sample of the preacher's pay. Bigelow, of whom I can hardly write without the desire to throw myself at his feet, went clothed like a beggar. McKendree preached the sermon that made him bishop in coarse garments of western homespun. Roberts came to Baltimore in clothes upon whose mendings his loving wife had well-nigh sewed away her eyes.

But the moral difficulties which confronted, or, as I said, attacked them, were greater than the physical. The early Methodist preachers in the Middle and Southern States were supposed to be Tories, and were known to be against slavery. Now, while the loyalists were far more numerous than the readers of Bancroft

ever dream, the patriots were suspicious, aggressive, and violent in their determinations. Martin Rodda, who had come over as a missionary from England after the coming of Shadford, managed by his distribution of royal proclamations to compromise the whole company of itinerants. Moreover, not a few of the preachers were, like Garrettson, opposed to war upon principle, and Asbury deemed it wisest to be silent. They could not hope to escape the fury of mobs, and they did not. In the South, although the anti-slavery feeling existed at that time, more or less, in every community, outspoken utterances upon the subject required no little courage. But greater than all this was the opposition to the Methodist preacher which grew out of his faithful plainness and unconquerable earnestness of speech, and out of the alarms which, in early days attended upon his ministry.

When men and women fell like corpses about Benjamin Abbott, he himself was seized with terror, and feared it was the devil's work. "I have no call from God to go about killing people," said the clear-headed, great-hearted man. But I know of nothing in Methodist annals more like a flash of inspiration than Abbott's speech to the terrified Presbyterian: "Wait till they come to; if they praise God, we'll know then it's not the devil's work." A flash of the same perfect intelligence which declared that none cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils. In the days of Whitefield, of Tennent, and of Davenport, as early

as 1743, Charles Chauncey had, in his "Seasonable Thoughts," attacked the revivalists of New England, because their preaching was attended by similar manifestations. Yet our early itinerants found everywhere indelible traces of Whitefield's power upon the souls of his hearers. Jarrett, that godly minded Virginia rector, to whom the pioneers could always look for help and counsel, notes the excitement which attended the preaching of the fathers. Dr. Hinde treated his wife as though she were attacked with disease when she became a Methodist, and, as she afterwards told with tears of laughter, clapped a huge blister upon her side, little thinking how soon he himself would be prostrated by the same amazing power. Yet, in spite of prejudice, in spite of violence born of hatred and fear, in spite of, or rather because of, plainness of speech, of purity of life, of simplicity of utterance and simplicity of dress the preaching of the pioneers was everywhere with power and success.

In New England, Lee met with peculiar difficulties; for the people of New England were reticent in private and disputatious in public, inhospitable until completely conquered, almost invincible in their intellectual prejudice and their spiritual pride. That he was strong enough to penetrate their steel-clad natures is the one abiding proof of his extraordinary character. Jesse Lee was the first of a type of Methodist preachers which it is to be hoped will never disappear. Human to the red-ripe heart of him, fearing no man, daunted by no obstacle, equal to any

crisis, he is too honest to affect a dignity which would be only affectation, and his humor has a flavor which the grim sarcasm of Asbury never possesses.

Lee would never have pilloried, as our "white brother," the young preacher, who was holding a sacramental love-feast in the parlor, while he himself was praying with the negroes downstairs. Asbury, on the other hand, could never have preached Lee's sermons upon the Connecticut tithes, nor suffered to escape his lips the retorts for which Lee became so famous. But a more earnest man than Jesse Lee has never entered a Methodist chapel nor sung a Methodist hymn. Natures like his are easily misunderstood. Their kindly humor is often mistaken by smaller men for a lack of serious depth. Broad and deep as the sea, by a strange inversion, they are remembered for the white caps that crest their billows or the phosphorescent gleam upon their surface, rather than for the Neptunic energy which is the core and center of their being. Himself a spiritual son of the first American itinerant, Robert Williams, the great company of his spiritual descendants will make the humble Irish preacher, over whom Wesley shook his questioning head, a familiar name to distant generations. A convert of the man who sold the first Methodist books in America, the first "History of American Methodism," flowed from his honest pen. A Virginian by birth, the apostle of New England Methodism, he died at Hillsborough, Maryland, 1816, a

triumphant death, and was buried here at Baltimore. No children followed him to the grave; for he, like Asbury, refused to bind a woman to his life of toil; but at the marriage supper of the Lamb the childless hero shall rejoice in the thronging sons and daughters that hail him father in the Lord.

In the West and South the difficulties were even greater than in the East. Men on the frontiers were strong and sometimes wild; their spiritual conquerors had no easy task. But men like Ware, McKendree, like Shinn and Robert and Cook; men like Tucker, who, praying and fighting with Indians, fell dead amidst the boat-load of his kindred, whom he had saved by his courage; men like Ogden, Beauchamp, and Bigelow, were equal to this amazing work. The South was manned by soldiers like George and Bruce, Hitt, Lee, Smith, Reed, Sargent, and the extraordinary George Dougharty. Let me speak a moment of Beauchamp and of Dougharty.

Beauchamp, the son of a Methodist preacher of Huguenot extraction, was born in Kent County, Delaware, in 1772. A school teacher at eighteen, a Methodist preacher at nineteen, he was a scholar all his life. After preaching with great success in the East, he located, because of failing health, in 1801. In 1815 we find him at Chillicothe, where he edited the *Western Christian Monitor*, and where he produced a marked impression upon all the region round about. In 1817 he started to found a colony in Illinois. With

his family and his assistants he moved in a boat down the Scioto and Ohio, and up the Wabash River. The flowing water echoed to the sound of prayer and song as the little colony moved on. Arrived at Mt. Carmel, Beauchamp became preacher, doctor, surveyor, teacher, and lawmaker for the little town. Broken in health, he retired to his farm to come forth once more into the itinerant ranks, in which he died in 1824. Eloquent as Francis Hodgson was eloquent, with logic all aflame, with thought at white heat, he thrilled the souls of those who heard him into sympathy with the movements of his own luminous mind, of his own uplifted and expanded soul. Like Lee, he was almost a bishop; like Lee, he needed no official dignity to manifest his greatness.

George Dougharty was born in South Carolina, also in 1772, and began to preach in his twenty-sixth year. Nine years after, broken all to pieces by study, by toil and by disease, he carried through the annual conference at Sparta, Ga., a resolution that "if any preacher should desert his station through fear, in time of sickness or danger, the conference should never employ that man again." No mob could frighten him, no disease get through his body to his soul, no difficulties daunt his ardent spirit. He hungered for knowledge and thirsted for men's souls. Original, lucid, swift of mind and swift of speech, he would have been overmastering in his eloquence from the sheer intensity of his nature; the inspiration of God

made him irresistible. Like Bigelow, nay, like his Master, without form or comeliness, for small-pox had disfigured a beautiful face, his tall, ungainly form was the home of spiritual energies and beauties of the rarest kind. Terrible as lightning, the rowdies who came thundering into camp with the tramp of buffaloes, fled like frightened swine before the outbreak of his appalling speech. Gentle as moonlight, the only fear of his dying hour was that he was too much trouble to his friends. In a brief life of less than two-score years he wrought himself, like some amazing natural energy, into the minds and characters of thousands.

But what folly tempts me beyond mere names? The Methodist pioneers and their work! One hand alone of all that ever wrote is equal to the theme—the hand that wrote the epistle to the Hebrews. And even that would break down at last in divine despair with its —“Time would fail me to tell” of Owen and of Webster; of Ruff, the spiritual father of Garrettson; of Littlejohn, who equaled Dickens in learning; of Easter, who counted McKendree and George among his trophies; of the “three bishops”—Shaw and Lakin and Jacob—who first penetrated the wilderness of western Pennsylvania; of Wilson Lee, who hazarded his life upon the frontiers of Ohio and Kentucky; of Sargent and McHenry, of Isaac Smith, of Penn Chandler, of Solomon Sharp, of Sale, of Strange, who gave back his house so that he might keep on singing—

“No foot of ground do I possess,  
No cottage in this wilderness;”\*

of Billy Hibbard and Peter Vannest, of Samuel Parker, of David Young, and scores of others “of whom the world was not worthy.”

The historic changes of the American continent have been so rapid and so startling that an accurate picture of the West and Southwest of a hundred years ago seems like a disordered dream. Bedford, Pennsylvania, and Cumberland, Maryland, were at that time outposts of civilized life. Not till 1794 did the Indians abandon Ohio, pursued by the mad threat of Mad Anthony Wayne, that he would rise from his grave to destroy them if they ever dared to return. The only roads in Ohio when this century began were paths made by cutting out the underbrush, and blazing or marking the trees. Sometimes not even the underbrush was cut away, and the traveler was obliged to follow the marks. In the spring he was often knee-deep in mud; in the winter, if without a compass, hopelessly adrift in the snow. At night, in all seasons, he was exposed to the jaws of ravenous beasts.

But rough as was the country, the settlers were sometimes worse. For months and years the little

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\* Chancellor Sims tells me that upon his death-bed the title-deeds of another farm were brought to Strange, which he accepted, saying he was glad that his family was provided for. I wish I knew the giver's name, that I might record it here.



class of Jonah Johnson, at Marietta, Ohio, could never meet without being assaulted by a lawless mob, who stoned the house, broke the windows, fired squibs, and covered the chimney in order to annoy the worshipers with smoke. In new communities men are apt to be a law unto themselves, and righteousness must be clothed with courage, with power, and with light, to bring such social chaos into order. Abbott had been assaulted with bayonets even in New Jersey. But every western preacher might have to face a mob, and camp-meetings must be policed by brethren who could fight as well as pray. The subtler danger was the greater one, the danger of losing their great love for souls in the midst of difficulties which wore away the nerves and stirred the baser passions. But God wrought in the western wilds in his own mysterious way. The rough scuffle was often the beginning of a better life, the arms that clutched each other in desperate struggle, often twined afterwards in Christian love; from the mouths which had uttered curses came the hallelujahs that made the sky resound as when the sons of God shouted for joy to the choir of the morning stars.

Far be it from me to suggest that there were no shadows to this picture—backsliding and apostacies, cowardice and jealousies, zeal without knowledge, precious lives unduly wasted. dissensions, schisms, open quarrel and disruption. Even McKendree swerved for a moment in the O'Kelly trouble. Lee was perhaps defeated by a rumor which Asbury felt

compelled openly to disavow. Bishop George speaks sadly, in his memoir, of the division he encountered among the people, and of the growing disposition among the preachers to deal sharply with each other. The very ablest itinerants were often forced to locate; nearly all who married must do so or leave their wives alone for the greater part of the year, in many cases returning to them poorer than at their going. So that the depleted ranks were of necessity filled up with the crude and inexperienced, who often marred instead of making; for nothing is truer than Asbury's saying: "The preacher who does no good is sure to do much harm."

Of culture, that is of classical culture, the pioneers were almost destitute. Dickins was an Eton scholar, Coke an Oxford graduate; some few of them had as good an education as the schools of the Middle States would afford, but many of them were destitute in early years of the very elements of knowledge. But happy is that school of theology where the students hunger and thirst for knowledge as did many of the fathers. Asbury's first savings were spent for books; many of his helpers struggled to read the Bible in Greek and Hebrew. Valentine Cook mastered German so as to preach it intelligibly. Henry Boehm, in spite of the surroundings of his boyhood, which only those familiar with "Pennsylvania Dutch" can fully appreciate, wrote German of the finest quality. "I remember reading to George Dougharty," wrote Lovick Pierce, "in our English Bible, while he read in his

Hebrew Bible, until I observed that the powerful working of his mind had completely exhausted him." "It is matter of astonishment to many who have become intimate with Methodist preachers," wrote Judge McLean, "that men who traveled frontier circuits where books were scarce, and the preaching places remote from each other, could have made such progress as they actually have done in useful knowledge." But in two kinds of knowledge they were unsurpassed—in knowledge of the human heart and the English Bible. The former they learned to know in all the naked simplicity of unconventional life, the latter they studied upon horseback, or upon their knees under God's open sky, or lying face-forward upon their elbows before the blazing pine-knots that served at once to heat and light the frontier cabin.

Unhampered by a culture which taught them to read all manner of traditions *into* the Scriptures, they came to the Word of God with the healthy minds of eager children, baptized with holy zeal, and illuminated with divine intelligence. Their souls expanded as they inspired the Word of God; their utterance grew clear and strong from drinking of the river which has cut deep and wide the channels of our English speech. Their theology was a marvelous blending of Revelation, of Wesleyan tradition, and of intuitive philosophy. The great realities of sin and righteousness, and a judgment to come, were as manifest to them as darkness and daylight and storm. Each with a definite experience of his own,

an experience fresh every evening and new every morning, what other men had explained away as a metaphor they knew as literal fact. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God," was more to them than glorious hyperbole. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," the most ungrammatical among them refused to construe into the future tense. The great love with which they felt themselves beloved made them too strong for the narrow logic and contracted exegesis which denied the possibilities of mercy to any human creature. Free grace and full salvation! If God were good and great, if the face of Jesus Christ were anything more than the world's best dream, then free grace and full salvation must be true.

They were no respectors of persons, and therefore made a profound impression upon men and women of every condition of life. Benjamin Rush thought Gill the greatest of divines, and William Penn Chandler was his bosom friend. Perry Hall, the home of Henry Gough, has echoed to the prayers of many a pioneer preacher. Mrs. Russell, the sister of Patrick Henry, told John Tunnell that until he came she knew not what religion meant. McKendree and Gatch were the cherished friends of John McLean. Yet the fathers never betrayed the rich by obsequious cowardice, or insulted the poor with supercilious neglect, or the worst conceits of patronizing condescension. The convicted murderer upon the scaffold, the prisoner in his wretched jail, the beggar on the

highway, the desperadoes of town or forest, the children playing by the roadside, the slaves in the rice-swamp, the Indian in his wigwam, all were human souls, all were lost children of the living God, whom Christ and they were out together hunting at the peril of their lives. "Who will go to the desert land, the almost impassable swamps, to the bilious diseases of the Great Pee Dee, the region of poverty and broken constitutions?" asked Francis Asbury. No wonder that men's hearts are standing still, when the quivering voice of Enoch George breaks the silence, "Here am I; send me." This courage, this humility, this faith, this intensity, this power, this all-embracing love, how is it to be explained?

A shepherd stands watching his flock on the edge of a desert overshadowed by the rugged sides of a barren mountain, when lo! a flame of fire bursts from a neighboring bush. He looks to see the crackling twigs fall to ashes, to see the bush vanish like a vision from his eyes. But it burns and is not consumed. And he says, I will turn aside and see the great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the midst of the burning bush.

Shall I go on? Must I explain? O God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, speak to us from out the flaming branches of our fathers' lives!



## COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS





## COMMEMORATIVE ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELE-  
BRATION OF GARRETT BIBLICAL  
INSTITUTE MAY 7, 1906.

### I.

GARRETT Biblical Institute originated through forces that have been shaping Methodism since the days of Susanna Wesley;—the generous intelligence of pious women, the zeal of Christian preachers hungry for the power of knowledge, and the energy of devoted laymen, wise to perceive that light must temper fire to render it a means of life.

Eliza Garrett, to judge from her portrait and from the scanty records of her that we cherish sacredly, was a woman of rare simplicity and intelligence and piety. Brought to Chicago by her adventurous husband, when Chicago was only a frontier village, she braved with him the difficulties and discomforts of pioneer success and added to his rude strength that of her finer and gentler nature.

She became a Christian and a Methodist, through the preaching of a young man too little known to our present generation;—a young preacher from Tennessee to whom Chicago Christianity and Chicago Methodism are greatly indebted. The story of his conversion when a boy is thrilling and inspiring; but the native fibre of the lad was also quite remarkable. He

possessed that glorious endowment, a prompt, intrepid, indomitable will. This made it easy for him to prefer the reproach of Christ to his father's roof, and when he became obedient to the vision that called him to preach, this carried him through the trials of his school life, made bitter by extreme poverty. This, too, made his eloquence effective. For it never occurred to Peter Borein to think the sermon ended until the listener was saved. To him the tears of his hearers were not a tribute to his powers but an invitation to engage in personal entreaty, to seek out contrite hearts in their homes and stores and workshops so that he might win them permanently for Jesus Christ.

It was Peter Borein's persuasive pleadings that led Eliza Garrett to her Saviour; and the expression of his regret that poverty had denied him an adequate preparation for the ministry, created and fostered in her generous mind the vision of a school in which such men might be trained to the utmost efficiency.

John Dempster, like Peter Borein, lacked the associations and the discipline of the college; he, too, was a man mighty in speech and in deed, though his eloquence was wholly different in type from that of Mrs. Garrett's young pastor. The son of a Scotch father, a Presbyterian minister, who had been once a Methodist itinerant, John Dempster united in himself the four qualities of the Caledonian with the romantic traits of the American pioneer. Bereft of his father

in his childhood, the orphan early became a wanderer and this romantic impulse shaped his whole career. It led him from New York to Canada, from North to South America, from Buenos Ayres to New York City, from the mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire to the shores of Lake Michigan. And he died with visions of theological schools on the hither side of the Rocky Mountains and on the Pacific slopes of the great hills still lingering in his mind. For the wanderer was suddenly called to larger activities, although not before he had left upon this region imperishable traces of his power. Pathetic and significant, indeed, is the craving of men like Peter Borein and John Dempster for the strength of knowledge. Neither of them lacked spirituality, both knew the value of strong feeling, each of them recognized the importance of a consecrated will. Dempster especially was a vigorous thinker, who wrestled with the fundamental problems of life; he certainly never imagined that erudition however minute, or learning however extensive, could be a substitute for an intelligence obedient to the word of Christ. But with a preternatural insight and foresight he measured the needs of the American empire that he saw in the making. And although he deemed divine illumination the transfiguring and essential element in the preparation of men for the Christian ministry, it was clear as revelation to him that the coming multitudes of the western world would not submit permanently to

the spiritual guidance of preachers ignorant of science, of history, of human society and of divine revelation. Yet his plans were bitterly opposed.

His Biblical Institutes were not erected easily. On the contrary, his determination to found them exposed him to distrust and ridicule, and even obloquy. From the beginning of the itinerancy there has been resistance both active and passive to the educational system which owes its origin to John Wesley. That illustrious teacher was compelled to tell his helpers that if they would not study their books they must return to their homes; the heroic efforts of Adam Clarke to become a great scholar were seconded by very few of his ministerial brethren, and his boldness in exegesis provoked an enmity which pursued him even beyond the grave. And as in England, so in America. The plan for district or conference schools, quite as remarkable as anything in early Methodism, the plan set forth in detail in the early minutes of Asbury's Council elicited from James O'Kelly deliverances so bitter that they might be termed vituperation. And yet no part of our history is more wonderful, when it is studied locally, than the history of our American Methodist schools; schools established by a few resolute men, and of which it is no exaggeration to say that the foundation stones were cemented with blood.

It would be unjust to our pioneers, however, to belittle their reasons for this opposition. They were men, many of them, of great natural gifts. They were compelled to meet the opposition of a professedly

learned clergy. In some cases, to be sure, they found sympathy, but in most they were treated with reserve and ridiculed for their want of college training.

They read their Bibles in the light that streamed from human faces and from the countenance of God. They trusted more to the beatings of their own converted hearts and to the joys of their own experience than to the refinements of Hebrew syntax or Greek etymology. Their theology was simple, easy to state and easy to apply. "All men are sinners, all men can be saved in Jesus Christ, and there is full salvation to all whose faith apprehends the living Christ in his power to save now and to save completely." They drew the proofs of it both from the Holy Scriptures and from the writings of God upon their own souls. It was natural, therefore, for such men to dread the influences of schools established avowedly to obtain a more learned ministry. They feared that such schools would decoy into the work some whom God had not called, who were seeking a livelihood for themselves rather than eternal life for their fellow-men. They feared also that even for those who were called of God to the ministry, the atmosphere of the schools might be too frigid, that it would chill if it did not kill their ardor. And finally they feared the substitution of elaborate preparation for that inspiration of love which they knew to be the preacher's chief power in public and in private ministries. In a word, they feared, and they feared rightly, a professional clergy.

Fortunately for us John Dempster and not a few of our early leaders, although themselves without scholastic training, were clearsighted enough to perceive that the mission of Methodism required it to be more than an awakening agency. They saw, as Wesley had seen, that without training the fruits of evangelism would perish. The ravages of Millerism and Mormonism soon taught them that their converts must be *established in the truth*; that denunciation of popular error only advertises and propagates the contagious hallucination. The gospel seed must be kept unmixed from baleful folly, and sown on ground tilled thoroughly. John Dempster moreover was among the first to perceive that our colleges and universities would be ultimately and quite rapidly secularized. Harvard College was originally a school for ministers. Its motto remains to this day "Pro Christo et Ecclesiae," but it required all Mr. Lowell's wit and ingenuity to stretch that motto into anything like correspondence with present conditions at Cambridge. The rapid development of physical science, its numerous contributions to material wealth, the startling developments in the fields of geology and biology, extreme specialization in every department of investigation have extinguished schools of the earliest type. Such a teacher as Alexander von Humboldt would create as much astonishment in the modern class room as a living mastodon; and be regarded not only as a specimen of an extinct but of an inferior species.

It was, I repeat, an almost intuitive forecast of this transformation of the college that guided the founders of our theological schools. They saw that however valuable the college of liberal arts might remain as a preparation for life in general, it would soon cease to be sufficient as a preparation for the Christian minister of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed it might easily become a hostile force, difficult to encounter and more difficult to conquer; and therefore the minister of the future would require a preparation in which he would be furnished for every good word and work; a preparation that would fit him to cope with science falsely so-called, and with the superstitions that perpetually arise to plague and to destroy the multitude. And their breadth of view was quite as notable as their foresight. They sought to prepare men for missionary enterprise in distant lands, and for work upon our own frontiers where the Ten Commandments are frequently suspended, and the Sermon on the Mount dwindles to a memory. They recognized that it would be alike difficult to hold the rural community and the great city; that into the former would penetrate inevitably the teachings of modern literature and of modern science, while the latter with its material prosperity and its polyglot populations would force upon the Protestant minister problems difficult enough to challenge the strongest intelligence trained by the wisest masters.

The two forces already mentioned, the generosity

of a pious woman and the resolute zeal of preachers hungry for the power of knowledge, were rendered most beneficent and efficient by a third energy, that of a group of laymen as noteworthy as any known to our American Methodism, Grant Goodrich, John Evans, Orrington Lunt. Each of these strong characters differed strikingly from the others, yet all of them united easily in a common fourth as to the value of knowledge and the power of the Gospel. Each of them was a notable instance of the pioneer spirit, each a splendid trophy of Methodist victory. All three were shrewd men of the world but as generous as they were prosperous. They believed in success in that larger sense which glorifies the word—success shared with the community in which they lived, success that enriched the church through which they had been saved, success not merely for the children of their households, but for the new generation that they hoped and planned to make divinely strong and beautiful.

Grant Goodrich gave Mrs. Garrett his counsel without money or price. He furthered her plans. He, with his friends, rallied to the support of Dr. Dempster with their influences and their means. Judge Goodrich passed away before the others, but his name is inseparable from the history of our school. Governor Evans removed from the beautiful village that still bears his name to become the informing soul of Colorado, while Orrington Lunt was spared to us for many years to be our sagacity and safeguard,



to give us the joy of his presence, the support of his character, the fruits of his beneficent affection. To give us, too, the priceless boon of his daily prayers, for seldom indeed did he fail to mention the Institute and University, when he talked with the God in whom he trusted.

It is no injustice to the strong men who have taught in Garrett Biblical Institute to say that John Dempster has been from the beginning the informing spirit of the school. Deeply rooted in the love of God, his vigorous nature branched out boldly into a love of truth, a love of men, and a love of effects. One of two converts in an apparently unsuccessful meeting he had passed from awful darkness, or to use his own words, from "the blackness of a terrible night," to the glory of a divinely splendid sunrise. He never forgot the agony and he never forgot the vision. But his mind was eager and penetrating; his conscience pure and courageous; he knew that his experience involved essential problems which he must not evade but encounter bravely, and if possible, conquer. I am quite ready to accept Dr. Hemenway's statement that there was nothing impressive in his stature or his features, but I cannot read his sermons or addresses without feeling the glow of two very searching eyes, or without detecting the vibrations of a very earnest voice. There is nothing trivial in his topics or in his treatment of them. This man who appeals to me is a wrestling Jacob, a Jacob after the wrestle though, an Israel crippled in the desperate struggle but a

prince who has had power with God and prevailed. Such themes as "Providence," and "Truth," and "The Authority of the Supernatural," and "The Supernatural Characteristics of Christ," attracted him by their grandeur and baffled him by their mystery. Baffled but did not conquer him, for his utterances commanded the respect of the chief writers of Methodism (and there were giants in those days), which was ample compensation for the stings of supercilious criticism, and the charges of Pantheism and sceptical tendencies flung at him by self-appointed champions of doctrines that they were incompetent even to understand, much less to defend. Dr. Dempster's love of truth, however, never deteriorated to a love of paradox or a love of novelty. It vindicated itself by thoroughness and coherence of thinking; by patience of investigation and caution of expression. It was comprehensive and catholic, open-minded yet firm, while sturdily intolerant of the flippant and the trivial and the unessential.

He loved men. I do not say humanity, but men. This made him from the hour of his own conversion untiring in his personal efforts for their salvation. It destroyed for him all distinctions of rank, or class, or complexion. It led him to endure patiently and cheerfully the hardships of his early ministry. It stirred him to missionary enterprise and carried him to South America, it inspired him to plead with Mr. Lincoln for speedy emancipation, and it won for him in spite of his austerities and peculiari-

ties the admiration and affection of his colleagues and his pupils.

But more than this he had that passion for genuine effects which is the glory of Methodist history, the world over. I do not mean a passion for advertisement and spurious success, the splash of motion without progress, the shouts of transient victories turning to permanent defeat. But I mean a passion for results that are realities, that have both pith and permanence, for fruit that needs no cunning covering of gauze to give it color and to hide decay. Here was a man who achieved and who believed in achievement, a man who insisted upon prompt as well as permanent achievement, yet a man never decoyed into sympathy with methods that merely counterfeit efficiency. These characteristics of Dr. Dempster are traceable through every period of our history. Garrett Biblical Institute, rooted and grounded like its first great teacher in the love of God, has stood for fifty years, bearing upon its branches the same precious fruit—the love of truth, the love of men, and the love of prompt and permanent effects.

Before I speak of Dr. Dempster's colleagues or of his successors, and before I make mention of their pupils, I must glance at one impressive figure that rises from our early records—the form of Matthew Simpson. In 1859, writes Dr. Hemenway to a friend, the village was excited by the news that Bishop Simpson intended to make Evanston his home. He was then in the fulness of his strength, and already

famous for his thrilling eloquence. He came. He accepted the presidency of the school. Magnanimous, far-sighted statesman that he was, he gave it the weight of his influence, in the period of his greatest power. In after years I came to know him personally, and to receive from him not only inspiration but priceless instruction. And I can well imagine that his presence in this community, and his advice to this early faculty were highly prized. For there were in Matthew Simpson springs of intelligence and spiritual magic that were full of surprises. He had no attractions of person or of voice to the superficial observer when seen at rest, yet there was something startling even in his private conversation when his mind was stung into activity by some sudden thought, just as there was something overwhelming in the public revelations of him when audience and subject combined to urge him to his utmost effort.

But what I desire to note here is the breadth and range and candor of his mind. He, too, loved the truth, not in any pretentious spirit, not in the vanity of men who decorate themselves with novelties, but in the spirit of the Apostle who would prove all things and hold fast that which is good. He was the most progressive bishop of his time, and his ideas of progress have been incorporated into the constitution of American Methodism. Greater, however, has been the influence of his catholic spirit, which he breathed into the students of Indiana Asbury University, and which, I have no doubt, whenever they heard him, enlarged

and ennobled the students of Garrett Biblical Institute. The original faculties of our Methodist institutions were rich in personal power. The names of Fisk and Olin, of Thomson and Merrick, of Durbin, McClintock, Emory and Allen, of Hunter and Simpson make our annals splendid. And the first faculty of this Institute though small in numbers was strong in courage, intelligence and piety. Dr. Bannister, like Dr. Dempster, was deeply interested in the larger problems, ready at any time to match conclusions with his vigorous colleague. Dr. Kidder, courteous, systematic, self-possessed, industrious, taught by precept and example the value of method in multiplying one's efficiency. Dr. Bannister, though better trained than Dempster, was less intense in thought, serener in feeling, more facile yet far less powerful in speech. Differing from both outwardly and inwardly, Francis Hemenway exercised a peculiar charm. Like them he loved truth and men and permanent results; but he was more sensitive than they to the music of poetry and of fine diction, to the delights of literature and to the beauties of nature.

It was indeed a rare company of teachers; happy the scholars that enjoyed their instruction!

Equally notable have been their successors. Ninde and Ridgaway resembled Hemenway rather than Dempster; Raymond and Bennett were of the other mould. The former were examples of sweetness and light; the latter of intellectual power environed by intense feeling. Ninde and Ridgaway loved the beauty

of holiness; truth attracted them because it glorified the world and blessed the community that felt its radiance. Each of them delighted in John Wesley's "warming of the heart;" each was eager to make it the experience of those to whom he preached.

Miner Raymond was an original thinker rather than a scholar, a man deeply interested in fundamental problems. Mistrustful of the verbal cloud-land that careless observers mistake for mountain ranges, rich in hidden mines of wisdom, he uttered the thoughts of the wise in the language of the people. Like Dr. Dempster, he did not escape sharp criticism; indeed he was compelled to defend himself in words of precious substance and thrilling eloquence. And in that suitable declaration he recognized, with every great thinker in the history of theology, that the prime question after all is this: How shall we conceive of God? there is the central mystery around which all other problems resolve.

Dr. Bennett united the vigorous thinker with the thorough scholar; so eager for knowledge that he invested all that he had in order to acquire it; yet never the slave of books or the idolater of erudite authority. He added to an unusual breadth of learning the minute investigations of a specialist; and exhibited to his pupils a mind of unusual vigor, thoroughly trained and thoroughly furnished. Yet like Dr. Dempster he loved men, and truth for men's sake, and he, too, had that craving for results that makes the strenuous American so great a wonder to less

impatient races. He craved a nobler Methodism, a nobler Protestantism, a nobler Christianity, a nobler world; and he longed and worked for their speedy coming.

The vines here planted soon bore fruit. Before many years had elapsed the graduates of Garrett were known throughout Methodism and beyond, for their courage, their intellectual independence, their missionary zeal, their practical sense and their spiritual power. It is for one of their own number to speak of them more adequately. It is enough for me to say that in them the whole church is honored. It would be easy for me to name those who have been prominent in ecclesiastical administration, in educational labors, in pastoral activities, and in missionary enterprises, but it would not be easy to name those who have been most useful in the service of the Master, for our measurements are at best inadequate. Only the Lord of the harvest can be trusted to determine which of his servants has brought in the largest and richest sheaves.

Of the missionary Bishops of the Church two are graduates of the Institute and their names are often heard. But a third of these missionary Bishops was led to Christ by one whose name is seldom mentioned here in America, one who is known in India as Dear Old Fox. And I take it that like things are true of our alumni as a body. We may indeed rejoice in those that reach distinction and renown, and yet if we knew everything, we might be more touched and

more thrilled with the achievements of those who have been only eager to preach the truth, who have been wholly absorbed in their love of men, and wholly employed in gathering and preserving the results of their personal ministry.

The Institute in these fifty years has passed through more than one season of financial trouble. There was a time quite early in its history when it looked as though its doors must be closed. It was carried successfully through that period of distress by the fidelity of teachers, the courage and the sagacity of friends, and the helpful spirit of Methodist preachers and Methodist laymen in this Northwestern country. In 1866 Methodist women, among whom Frances Willard was conspicuous, animated by the spirit of Eliza Garrett and the traditions of early Methodism, united together to erect a building to the memory of Barbara Heck. At a later period Mrs. Cornelia Miller generously endowed the chair of Practical Theology. We should gladly have welcomed her to this jubilee, and offered her our grateful thanks. It was not to be. Even so, Eliza Garrett passed away before the transfer could be made of the Dempster school to the Institute that bears her name. But these generous women found it blessed to give, and one of the last contributions to the school came from another like them out upon the Pacific Coast whose grateful heart desired to perpetuate the influences to which indirectly she owed many blessings.

The Chicago fire that brought calamity to thousands



spared not our school. It would have perished, perhaps, but for the generous sympathy of Methodist people throughout the country, and for the liberality of its immediate friends. On the other hand, the Institute has shared in the prosperity of Chicago and of Evanston, so that the value of its original endowment has been greatly enhanced, its buildings increased and improved, and its equipment, especially its library, greatly enlarged. The grounds upon which its buildings stand were granted to the Institute in perpetual leasehold by the trustees of Northwestern University, and from the beginning the relations of the two schools have been amicable, intimate, and mutually helpful. Indeed the early catalogues of both institutions display a closeness of co-operation which gave to the students of either Institution all the advantages of a beautiful co-operation. It was indeed a happy situation for the students that came here to Evanston, who might listen to Randolph Foster and John Dempster, to Henry Bannister and Francis Hemenway, to Matthew Simpson and to Oliver Marcy, and to another who, though among the living, I do not hesitate to name, to our honored Dr. Bonbright. (Applause.)

It is, therefore, a pleasant duty on this occasion to recall this co-operation of the past and to return thanks to the trustees of the university for their inestimable kindness. Throughout this entire period the majority of our own trustees have been also trustees of Northwestern University. Yet our inter-

ests have been guarded with loving care, and nothing has been done to prevent our free activity, and our harmonious co-operation with other Methodist colleges. We remain today what we have been from the beginning, a school for the entire church, one of a group that originated in the mind of John Dempster, and by him intended to train the ministry of the entire Methodist Episcopal Church.

## II.

Here I might stop. But that were neither brave nor wise now that the value of the theological school is so frequently and insistently denied. The agnostic asserts that the objects of our inquiry lie forever beyond all human ken, while the Roman pontiff asserts his supreme and exclusive authority in religion and in morals, declaring resistance to his deliverances, rebellion against the decrees of God.

In Protestant Christendom the blind conservative reiterates propositions whose origin and scope he refuses to examine, while the iconoclastic radical, equally arrogant, scoffs at the brave conservative who brethren. On the one hand are the unlearned and will not pluck out his eyes to please his self-maimed the unstable who wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction; on the other those who darken them with a multitude of conjectures, or who mutilate and reshape them to meet the exigencies of a favored theory. We are mocked by one company as survivals of a former age, as mere vestigial shadows of the evangelistic period which (they affirm) has no more to do with the present world than the magic of the middle ages; and we are upbraided by another company because we will not recognize the power of God in every human mimicry of the operations of the Holy Spirit. We have reached a time, apparently, when it is more comfortable to be crazy than to be sane; a time in which the two great idols of modern civiliza-

tion, the brazen god up-to-date and the wooden god out-of-date divide between them the babbling multitude. For this reason, if for no other, it is time to ask, What have schools of theology in past times contributed to the preservation and the propagation of the pure word of Jesus Christ?

Let us begin, then, with the period that extends from the apostolic age to the council of Chalcedon, and consider the achievements of the Apologists and of the two great schools of Alexandria and of Antioch. They are memorable for three great achievements. They saved the Old Testament from rejection; they declared and defended the essential divinity of Christ; they preserved and exalted the precious doctrine of His complete humanity.

(1) These successors of the apostles carried the Old Testament triumphantly through a crisis which lasted down to the days of Augustine, a crisis of perilous severity, in which the Scriptures were assailed by Jewish teachers and pagan philosophers, by Marcionite Christians and Gnostic Christians whose combined hostility was hard indeed to overcome. The Jew, although accepting the Old Testament as the word of God, rejected the Christian interpretation of it with scorn and hatred. The pagan philosophers assailed the Christian teachers as Atheists, and joined the Jew in deriding the Christian explanation of the Jewish Scriptures; while they mocked at the worship of Jesus, the crucified Galilean. The Marcionites accepted the Gospel of Luke and the epistles of Paul,

but refused to see in the God of the Old Testament the God proclaimed by Paul and manifested in Jesus, Paul's Redeemer. The Gnostics not only perverted the New Testament with spurious traditions and fictitious gospels, but they, too, assailed the Law and Prophets as unworthy of consideration. Surely it was no small triumph to make the Scriptures of despised Judea the *biblia* of the Roman Empire. But precisely this was accomplished by Justin and Irenaeus, by Clement of Alexandria and his great pupil Origen. And how was it done? Not by the letter that kills but by the spirit that makes alive. Jesus himself had pointed the way. He had overthrown the method of the scribes; he had rejected the materializing conceptions of the Messiah, those that filled the Jewish imagination and cramped the minds of his own disciples. Paul followed Jesus. For him the law and the prophets contained the enduring truths upon which to build the kingdom of God, Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone. Accused of making void the Law he replied triumphantly, We establish it through faith. It is quite true that the later successors of the Apostles allowed themselves great freedom and great boldness of interpretation; but that they saved the Old Testament is plain enough from the declaration of Augustine that he would never have accepted it if he had not learned from Ambrose the proper understanding of its contents. And Ambrose learned this from the Greek theologians. Certainly I should be loath to accept the statement

of Cardinal Newman that the fate of orthodoxy is bound up with this mythical system of exegesis. But no candid student of the history of doctrine can fail to acknowledge that in spite of their errors and excesses the Apologists and the Christian Platonists of Alexandria saved the Old Testament to the Christian Church in the greatest crisis of its early history.

(2) When the school of Antioch developed the historical method of interpreting the Scriptures, a method so different from the allegorical exegesis of the Alexandrian teachers, a difference of results became inevitable. It need not have been a calamity; it might have been a blessing. That it occurred in the bitterness of hate rather than in the radiance of love was the real calamity; and that the person of Christ was degraded in the carnal strife was the climax of calamity. The methods of the two schools might have been combined. For each had its reason for being; each was justified by its results. In the Nicene creed the Alexandrians incorporated their views of Christ's divinity, the view that Athanasius subsequently championed against the world; in the creed of Chalcedon Antioch saved for posterity the truth of Christ's actual and complete humanity. Neither school taught the whole truth; neither taught unmixed error. And to this day we are perplexed to determine the limits of either method; or, to state the problem more precisely, to separate the poetical and didactic elements from the history in which we find them imbedded.

Turn now to the scholastic theology of the middle ages. The awakening intellect of Europe confronted by the demands of an amazing hierarchy began to consider its beliefs, and to insist upon a reconciliation of them with reason and conscience. The thinkers of the church, men like Anselm and Abelard, not only appreciated but conquered room for the movements of human reason. Anyone familiar with the vulgar and even repulsive representations of Christ and his atonement which these two great thinkers set aside is glad to do them homage. They differed in thought and speech and character. Like two master builders of a spiral tunnel through the Alps or the Rockies they approached each other from opposite sides of a great difficulty; yet each labored to make a highway for faith and reason. "I understand that I may believe," cried the one, "I believe that I may understand," cried the other. *Cur Deus Homo* (Why did God become a man) each saw to be the fundamental problem of the Christian faith, and each presented a solution, majestic and commanding. Only a shallow thinker ridicules the work of Anselm or sets over against the grandeur of Abelard's conception of the work of Christ, his bitter controversy with Bernard. The great and imperishable faith remains; these two schoolmen did much to free theology from the dead body of superstition, and in spite of their bondage to Augustinian error rose to the height of their great argument. For both of them saw this: the work of Christ had its origin in the nature of

God, and according to one's conception of the Eternal Father will always be one's conception of the work of His Eternal Son. But as their conceptions of Him differed, so did their conclusions. We later thinkers are at liberty to reject or to alter or to combine them as superior knowledge of the Scriptures, and larger conceptions of the problems, and less beclouded apprehension of the Eternal Father may require. But it betrays an unseemly, nay, a very culpable ignorance of the primer of Historical theology to treat their conclusions with indifference, or to speak of them with disdain. What shall we say, though, of those who read into the Scriptures the very conclusions of these great schoolmen, while their mouths are filled with denunciations of the spirit in which they were reached?

Once more we have reason to regret the perversity of those clothed with brief authority. It was not the teachings of Anselm or of Abelard or even of Thomas Aquinas that corrupted the mediæval church. It was the wolfish greed for wealth and power, and pleasure, that fastened ravenously upon their defects. "The Church can say no longer silver and gold have I none," said the proud pontiff to the Angelic Doctor. "Neither," replied the great Thomas, "Neither can the Church say, Rise up and walk!" Alas! that the defects of the scholastic theology should be so quickly seized upon by pontifical cunning and episcopal subtlety to defend the abuses of the hierarchy, and that its nobler qualities should be so industriously forgotten. For



the student of Dante's great poem recognizes with Thomas Carlyle and Richard Church and with the Italian thinkers of our own century how vital and powerful were the essential truths of that medieval theology when married to the music of a poetic and prophetic mind. Whether it be the awful symbolism of the *Inferno*, or the thrilling pictures of the toiling penitents, climbing in slow content upwards towards the radiance of God, or the marvelous conversations of the *Paradiso*; everywhere one finds some fragments of the truth that saves.

And in the cantos of the mighty poem that later ages called divine, one hears too the prolonged echoes of the sobs of Jesus weeping over the New Jerusalem. O, that thou hadst known the things that make for thy peace!

Dante died as John Wiclif was born. What became of Dante's contemporary, Roger Bacon, who can tell? But we know what became of Wiclif, the Oxford scholar, and of John Hus, the professor of theology at Prague. Wiclif was harried and persecuted and degraded from office, and threatened with destruction. Nor were his enemies without excuse in their own eyes. His teachings were destructive of the faith, they said! What would become of the world if the sacraments should lose their saving power? If the consecrated wafer were reduced to the mere emblem of a fact? If it ceased to be the efficacious and transforming and preserving mystical body of the Omnipotent Son of God? And to whom should sorrowing

and stricken women and children repair in their misery if clouds of doubt obscured the form of the Mother of Jesus?

We know, too, what became of John Hus. A reforming council burnt him at the stake. For it was easier to make ashes of a professor of theology than it was to cure the blood-poisoning with which the whole ecclesiastical system was infected and infiltrated. Catholics and Protestants alike unite now to condemn the moral and spiritual wickedness of that age, but neither Catholic nor Protestant has yet recognized their necessary connection with its intellectual tyranny. Light is necessary to life. It is indeed impossible to pluck the sun from the heavens, but it is possible, unfortunately, to pluck out the eyes of thinking men, or to doom them to the silence of the dungeon or the grave. And thus the fifteenth century which might have ended with a new and purified church to match a new and splendid science gave us a Borgia to bracket with a Copernicus.

“O! Lord, Open the eyes of the King of England!” Such were the last words of the great English scholar, William Tyndale, to whom we owe so many of the beauties and fidelities of our English version of the Bible. But Tyndale was only one of a large and extraordinary international company of scholars; Linacre and Colet, Erasmus and Reuchlin, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, were teachers, all of them. And the Reformation in its noblest aspect was Biblical science struggling with theological tyranny. I am

not now concerned to defend their position; I am satisfied to state it. They appealed to the Bible and to reason. Luther's reply to a demand for a retraction was an either, or. Convince me by Scripture, or convince me by sound reason. And in that eternal reply we hear the snapping of the fetters that had so long hampered the human intellect in the study of the word of God. In that reply, moreover, we hear the voice of the scholars of the future eager to know the Scriptures in all their history and in all their meaning.

The historian is not an apologist. It would not become me to defend the faults of Alexandria or of Antioch, of Augustine or Anselm, of Meister Eckhart or John Wiclif; and years of study have made me painfully aware of the shortcomings of the Reformation. Undoubtedly the chief of these was what John Milton described as old priest writ large into new presbyter. But Milton's description was inadequate, as appeared most plainly in the Arminian struggle in Holland. That tragic conflict in which Oldenbarnveld lost his life and Grotius lost his liberty, was mixed with political ambitions and the greed for dominion. The serpent is subtle above all the beasts of the field and never more subtle than when he coils himself around the souls of earnest and honest men. When saints like John Robinson are inveigled into ecclesiastical oppression, it must be that Satan has appeared to them as an Angel of Light. Arminius was a theological professor at Leyden; so were his most distin-

guished followers. Hugo Grotius, worthy to rank with the great thinkers of all time, elaborated the theory of the Atonement which seemed in the first half of the nineteenth century to be the final orthodox expression. But in the seventeenth century Arminianism was heresy or something worse both in Holland and in England. One of the famous documents of the English Revolution comprises a resolution of the House of Commons in which popery and Arminianism are classed together in the same phrase as equally detestable. Arminius and his disciples, though, would have made no impression upon thinking men if they had not rejected the exegetical methods by which the Calvinistic system had been defended. The breadth and boldness of Arminian interpretation of the Bible horrified their contemporary antagonists; but it must give an erudite Calvinistic theologian mixed feelings to note that while this Arminian breadth and boldness has invaded Scotland, the narrower methods upon which depend the decrees of Dort and the decisions of Westminster find most ardent adherents in supposedly Arminian circles.

In Germany, early in the eighteenth century the University of Halle became the center of movements which, though bitterly opposed as heretical and destructive of the faith, have come to be regarded in our time with enthusiastic reverence, and which in their connection with the Moravians, profoundly affected the Wesleyan revival. You will be surprised, I fancy, when I name their principles:

*Popular study of the Scriptures. Missionary activity at home and abroad. The relief and education of the poor and the care of orphans. Family and neighborhood prayer. Preaching to the heart rather than to the head. Insistence upon newness of life and the fruits of faith.*

These pietists of Halle created the first building of that splendid complex of schools and institutions for the poor which today adorns one section of the University city. They established in 1712 the first society for the distribution of the Bible, and, before William Carey was born, they sent the first Protestant missionaries of Germany to preach the gospel in East India. It seems to us who build into monuments for Spener and Francke the stones flung at them by their brethren—it seems to us incredible that they should have been suspected and ridiculed and denounced by their stiff and cold and barren orthodox colleagues. The explanation lies partly in their own mistakes and partly in the habits of their antagonists. The Halle pietists were always noble but not always wise; their opponents were sometimes noble but seldom wise. Criticism and collision were inevitable.

Now, if I have made myself understood, two things must be clear: 1. The forms of Christian doctrine have been shaped by theological schools. 2. Each notable change of form has been vehemently opposed and has got itself established only after a severe struggle.

And while, as a historian and a disciple of Jesus, I regret the bitterness and the wickedness that have stained this strife, the conflict of opinions I do not regret. I, for one, am glad that giants like Leibnitz and Huyghens opposed the Newtonian theories, and compelled the production of invincible proof. I, for one, am glad that every theory proposed for acceptance in the genuinely scientific world must be subjected by its propounder and his co-workers to the severest tests. The wisdom of true science, like the wisdom from above, is in the first place pure and in the second place peaceable; it is both and both simultaneously. The wisdom that is not pure cannot be peaceable and the wisdom that is not peaceable cannot be pure.

No! It is not the comparison or even the conflict of opinions that the historian condemns. He sees that truth is debtor alike to the defenders of the old and the champions of the new. He sees that God has seldom entrusted a great message or a sublime discovery to a coward, because it is God's order that messages and discovery should fight their way to better understanding and to a perfect use. All who have preceded us have died without the sight, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

In my boyhood the favorite rhetorical phrase that glittered in every speech ran thus: "We live in a marvelous age." Now we are told with tiresome reiteration, "We live in an age of transition." Well! So did Peter and John and Paul. What transition

could have been more marvelous than that which made the Scriptures of the Israelites, the Bible of the world, and the crucified King of the Jews, the Savior of mankind? We live in an age of transition. True, indeed! But so did Constantine and Athanasius and Julian and the Gregories, the age that saw the old-time religion of the Greek and Roman perish, and all the gods of the Mediterranean region fall down moaning. We live in an age of transition: Surely! But so did Luther and Zwingli, and Tyndale and Latimer, and Calvin and Knox.

The wise thing is to detect and to describe the characteristics of the transit we ourselves are making. Ours is often described as the age of science; but the part is here again put for the whole. Our age is an age of construction and reconstruction. So far as the present is concerned the only knowledge this age cares for is the knowledge by which we can construct, whether it be an ocean Leviathan equipped for wireless communication with the round globe, or some massive shelter for industrial activities, or some new commonwealth erected on the ruins of an ancient tyranny. Nay, even our destructive instruments are marvels of constructive ingenuity; the historian stands aghast as he watches the struggle of the constructive and combining spirit with the surviving barbarism, and notes how even science is seized and utilized and enslaved whenever the ancient spirit of destruction wins a temporary victory over the architectonic spirit of our epoch.

Such a spirit working among the accumulated institutions, and traditions, and methods, and beliefs of the past must of necessity be reconstructive also. These reconstructions began at the close of the eighteenth century, almost simultaneously in the political, industrial, scientific, and historical realms. They were attended with not a few dangers and many calamities. Such, unfortunately, is the course of human history. So it was when the Roman Empire was reconstructed; and Christianity was not the least sufferer in that tremendous process. So it was in the Reformation centuries which were stained with miseries and mistakes. How, let us ask bravely and solemnly, how does this spirit of construction and reconstruction affect our theological training? Let me reverse the order and speak of reconstruction first. The researches in physical science, geological and biological investigations, sociological and psychological inquiry have changed the face of the universe and the countenance of man. Neither the cosmos nor humanity are to the thinkers of our time what they were to Isaac Newton and to Richard Baxter, much less what they were to Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon. But we theologians are constantly forgetting that the doctrines we preach have been shaped and colored by the successive environments through which they came to us. What man has added to the truth of God, man must take away, once he has discovered to a certainty its human origin. That was the achievement of the reformers when they



demolished the treasury of merits, that purely human addition to the sepulchre of Jesus Christ; that was the achievement of the Wesleys when they scraped away the horrible decrees that had fastened upon Paul's glad tidings for every one that believeth. And if today we shall discover in the light of modern discovery that we are holding as essential truth any added human error we must surrender that error to Jesus Christ, who is the Truth. It is impossible for God to lie. He does not lie to us, whether we use unaided eyesight, or telescope, or microscope, or spectroscope. He has not stained the rocks with falsehood or the structure of animals with deception. It is blasphemous to assert that the world he has given us for a dwelling place is a labyrinth of fraud, sure to decoy us into darkness if we attempt its thorough exploration. Our business, then, as theological teachers is to relate as best we can the genuine discoveries of our time with our own theories purified again and again by prayerful study of the Word of God. To recognize, once and for all, that the Eternal Truth is never self-contradictory, that if He seems to contradict Himself, the trouble is in our eyes and not in His light, in the infinite movements of our puny minds, not in the tremendous sweep of His amazing revelations.

Yet, after all, the purification and reconstruction of our inherited theories is only an incident of our sublime endeavor. Construction is the watchword of our age. It is shouted on every side of us; it is the

flag unfurled by each company that attempts conquest of present powers and the control of the future. It is a proper watchword; it is a divine watchword. "Come, let us make man in our own image," said the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. "If any man is in Christ he is a new creature," said the great Apostle of the Redeemer of the World. Our theories, improve them how we may, have value only as they save souls, and homes and communities; only as they destroy saloons, and brothels, abolish wantonness, and greed, and graft; only as they make men love truth and hate lies, only as they make men do justice and love mercy and walk humbly with their God.

"Show us what you can do!" is the cry of our time. "See what we have done and what we are doing," is the answer from the physical and biological laboratory. "See the streams of fire that flash out under the rolling wheels, look at these photographs of invisible solar and stellar wonders, or these of diseases in the inward parts of man, listen to familiar voices calling you from far-off cities, summon with electric buttons powers more amazing than any that answered to Aladdin's lamp." Thus speaks the physicist from his laboratory. "See what we are doing," exclaims the biologist. "We are exploring the secrets of disease and the constructive energies of life. We are conquering diphtheria and hydrophobia, and the pestilence that walketh at noon-day. We have tracked the infinitesimal breeders of death to

their hiding places in the human body, and even the causes of mental misery to their lodgments in the human brain. All this has come from our study and courageous thinking. Now, prophets of Jesus, show us your miracles. These are works of natural power; surpass them if you can, ye that claim the presence and the power of the supernatural."

Brethren, the minister of Christ in the twentieth century must accept the challenge. And he must be trained to victory. He must recognize, once for all, that the only evidence that he is the servant of the supernatural, is supernatural result. But he must recognize also that the supernatural Christ works always in the natural world. The incarnation is the eternal assumption of humanity; Christ belongs to this world; this is the place of his achievement. His ministers, therefore, must be clothed with power as with a garment. It is for them to bring to the minds and hearts of this generation redeeming and transforming grace so that the enormous forces of the modern world may become the instrument of righteousness. The ancient prophets predicted the time when, on the bells of the horses should be inscribed "holiness to the Lord." The minister of the future must predict and help accomplish the prediction that dredge and dynamo, mill-wheel and steamship screw, all the complex contrivances of our modern civilization shall bear not to the eye of man, but in the sight of God, a like inscription. This means that the minister of the

future shall know his age and his community; that his thought shall be long and his speech short and quick and powerful; that he shall have that kind of strength that comes by prayer and self-denial, and by complete abandonment to the welfare of his fellow men. He is to preach the power of the living Christ, but he is personally to show how that power works. He is to *demonstrate* the wisdom of God; as Faraday demonstrated physical truth by astonishing performance. And demonstrating the truth of God in his own life, he is to proclaim it with the confidence of glorious verification to his fellow-men. He must expect opposition. Who of the creators of the modern world has not been baffled and ridiculed until he triumphed? Wisdom is justified by her children. The minister of the future must be justified by souls redeemed from meanness and mendacity, from lust and wantonness, from greed and pride and hypocrisy; souls redeemed to daily righteousness and brotherly kindness, to ministries of love and to missionary zeal. He must be justified by homes made permanent in prospect of immortal union, homes in which the children are twice born, knowing chiefly this about each birth, that they are abundantly and eternally alive. He must be justified by communities in which each man's welfare is becoming all men's purpose, by commonwealths whose ordinances, both in their utterance and their execution, vindicate the glorious saying of Richard Hooker that "of law no less can be said

than that her seat is the bosom of God and her voice the harmony of the world." He must be justified by a science which shall seek always first the betterment of man's estate and by an art which shall illuminate and transfigure all that is beautiful in human history, and all that is glorious in human ideals. The roar of the sea, said Leibnitz, is the accumulated sound of the separate waves that mortal ears cannot distinguish. The murmur that reaches us from yonder city is the accumulated beatings of millions of human hearts, the polyglot voice of millions of souls eager for life and eager for it now. Often as I listen to it I strive to analyze it into its separate meanings of misery and joy, of hate and love, of weakness and of power, of aspiration and despair, until it swells in my imagination to the voice of the whole world whose outcry brought to Bethlehem the Son of the Living God.

It was to realize His Kingdom that this school was founded. The woman who established it, the teachers who informed it with their eager and confident faith, the noble men and women who enriched it by their beneficent and sanctified intelligence had their eyes touched with prophetic wisdom. They foresaw the greatness of this city on the lake, they anticipated the multitudes of the Northwest and planned for a ministry equal to the opportunities and the necessities of a civilization vaster and more complex than they had ever known. They planned and

executed wisely. We are in the midst of what they foresaw and heirs to their achievement, and our best praise of them will be to greet our opportunities and to perform our duties in the same faith in which they wrought. The Lord's hand is not shortened that He cannot save. And He has surely provided some better thing for us, that they without us may not be made perfect.

**THE SERENITY AND BREADTH  
OF CHRISTIAN THINKING**





## THE SERENITY AND BREADTH OF CHRISTIAN THINKING\*

*“And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall guard your hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”—*  
PHIL. iv:7, 8.

PHILIPPI is now a ruin only and a name. But the Macedonian king who built it, and his greater son, Alexander, are still a power in the earth. The Latin inscriptions yet legible upon the shattered gateways, the fragments of yonder theater far up the hillside, bear witness of the imperial majesty to which the freeborn Roman citizen of Tarsus once appealed; for here by these ancient fountains, by these exhausted gold mines, the eagles of Jupiter deserted to the standards of Octavian, and Brutus perished fighting for the shadow of what never could be again. Commonwealth and empire both are ruins now. Yet the

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spirit of law, the instinct of far-reaching organization, of which the empire was the symbol and the source, remain the life of all political progress.

The church at Philippi has vanished, too. There are no more Euodias and Syntyches to be reconciled, there is no Epaphroditus now to pour forth his life in eager service, no loving disciples to share their treasures with their father in the gospel. The spot where Paul and Silas sang their midnight praises is quiet enough now. The walls within which the brethren listened breathless to the letters of Paul and Polycarp have crumbled into silence. "No voice nor solemn sound, in all the earth around." And yet, how powerful the shadow, how resonant the echo of that early time! For although, as Lightfoot says, the church of Philippi has lived without a history, and perished without a memorial, yet the glow and the beauty of the faith and fellowship, which gleam reflected in the letter of the Roman prisoner Paul, the outburst of affection that glorifies his captivity, and their thoughtful generosity are a treasure, an inspiration, an imperishable lesson for the church in every age.

But the anxiety of Paul was only too well founded—the fear that his fellow-laborers at Philippi were ceasing to be of one mind. Where Greek influence was dominant intellect overtopped everything, and the exceptional place of women in Macedonian society made the play of thought at Philippi both eager and exciting. One can easily fancy that there, more

even than at Corinth or at Ephesus, the exact relation of the gospel to inherited ideas and current philosophies was a topic of frequent and ardent discussion. So that in the vehemence of controversy, in the desire for vainglory, in the passion for intellectual display, they had forgotten the mind of Jesus Christ and the peace of God which passeth every understanding. In their zeal to out-argue and out-talk each other, they had forgotten the real goal of all mental effort in human society; to-wit, the co-operative discovery of the truth, the beauty, and the power of God. Accordingly, without narrowing in the least the circle of their thoughts, Paul points out to his beloved disciples the only medium in which the intellect can really achieve its perfect work. The peace of God which passeth all understanding must surround their hearts and minds in Jesus Christ. This peace, this atmosphere of concord, more wonderful, more precious than all their thinkings, is the breath of the wider intellectual and spiritual life. Inspired with the candor and the calmness of God, they might continue, he told them, their eager quest of all that exalts and strengthens human intelligence, and of all that adorns human existence; they might give every faculty the widest range and largest liberty.

Well, brethren, in nineteen centuries the forces of contention have proved mightier than the peace of God. Christendom today is not only complex and diversified; Christendom, alas! is also divided and discordant. For these divisions are not those of a well-

ordered household where all are united in harmonious activity under a common roof; nor those of an industrial multitude where division is the beginning of co-operation; where the final product is the outcome of intelligently distributed and concordant labor. But they are the divisions of disorganized energy, of mutual hindrance, of bewilderment and collision, of inharmonious purpose and conflicting principles.

Now, surely there is only one gospel and only one Christ. Hence you will be challenged by believers and by unbelievers to justify your separate existence, and to make plain the historic basis of your belief. Before, then, you enter into this Christendom of conflict and confusion, may it not be well for you to implore that peace of God which passeth all understanding, to keep your minds and hearts in Christ Jesus? Tempted as you will be, not only to strife, but to ignorance, to narrowness of view, to traditional prejudice and local bias, may it not be wise and helpful for you to take in at the outset the breadth and freedom, the depth and daring, of this great charter of Christian intelligence.

There is, I know, a fond idea among many preachers that they may set aside the challenge to justify their conception of Jesus Christ, and that, by confining themselves in thought and speech to truths of vital experience, they may live without any knowledge of the past as easily as an engineer guides his locomotive without a knowledge of the development of the steam engine.

Few men, I venture to say, have genius and grace enough for such an enterprise. What seems so easy is a task of tremendous difficulty. For it requires the highest genius and the richest grace to separate vital and necessary truth from inherited tradition and current prejudice, from the errors you have unconsciously absorbed, from the vagaries of your own mind or your own neighborhood, from the suggestions of sudden excitement, from the ideas and passions of the society and the age in which you live. A comparison of what good men at different times have deemed essential to salvation; nay, a comparison of what good men and women even now deem necessary to eternal life, is both perplexing and disheartening. And surely I do you no wrong when I tell you that you have not the genius or the inspiration to separate intuitively the pure truth of Jesus Christ from the alloy and the adulteration of human error so persistently mixed with it, and that you have hardly the grace to keep yourselves, without earnest and candid study, from traditional perversions and popular accommodations of the gospel.

Attempts to preach exclusively one's own experience, uncorrected, unilluminated, unenlarged by historical study, frequently result in a gospel of odds and ends, in a mixture of traditional beliefs, personal speculations and current superstition, where the truth of Christ is neutralized by the poison of individual and popular falsehood. Monasticism and Mahometanism were both the outcome of personal experience.

Each was a defiance of historic evidence; each originated in this overweening confidence of men in their own impulses and their own emotions; in the separation of the individual experience from the Life and Light of the world. And what havoc both have made! —the one by its fatalism, the other by its degradation of the early Christian ideal. That ideal was social and fraternal; a community of expectant souls, training themselves beforehand in the citizenship of the commonwealth of God. How pitiful the solitary, sordid conception of holiness which, originating in Upper Egypt, overshadowed and corrupted it. No! brethren, cling to your own experience of Jesus Christ; but do not measure the fulness of Jesus Christ by your own first experience. He is too large to be compassed by one mind, or one generation. Men and centuries are too full of error and of evil, of ignorance and vain imaginations, of haughty conceits and bold speculations, to comprehend Christ without distortion and without defect. Hence he has been crucified afresh in every epoch; there has never yet been room enough for him in the mind and heart of humanity. To accept your own limited experience for a complete conception of Jesus Christ is to behave like the fool in the fable who boasted that he could carry home the sun in his bucket of water; you mistake the flash of light in your own soul for the stupendous glory of the Son of God. He is, I repeat, too large to be measured by a single mind, albeit the mind of Origen or Augustine, of Thomas Aquinas

or of Calvin, of Wesley or of Edwards; too large, indeed, to be measured by all of them together; too massive in his influence upon human souls and human society; too mysterious in the depths of his being, the implications of his history, the intricacy of his relations to the movements of mankind; too thrillingly responsive to every phase of human development; too luminously instructive in every emergency of human progress.

Experience and experiment are words of the same root. Now what would become of science (I speak not simply of its theories, but of its power) did each explorer bound the kingdom of knowledge by the four walls of his own laboratory, did each investigator reject every experiment and every observation outside his own narrow activity? No! In the realm of science candor and co-operation have been the hidings of power. The thinkers of today glory in their inheritance, and keep alive the thought of Newton and Lavoisier, of Galileo and of Volta, by repetition of their experiments and new departures from their discoveries. As the peace of God keeps their minds and hearts faithful to the facts of nature and in the harmony of intellectual brotherhood, knowledge multiplies, and power flashes, from their thoughts. Will Christians never learn to enter upon their inheritance of spiritual achievement and of earnest gropings after God in the same energetic confidence of further discovery and future victory? Behind us stretch nineteen centuries of Christian experience, of the life of

Jesus Christ among Jews and Greeks and Romans, in the midst of crumbling empires and rising democracies, of exhausted philosophies and triumphant sciences, of social upheavals, political revolutions, moral despair, utopian expectation, intellectual transformation! In all these years of struggle with idolatries and superstition, with social defect and organized brutality, with multiplied error and manifold sin, with wild conceits and barbarous enthusiasms, with the backward drift of humanity which makes the redemption of the individual and of society so appallingly difficult and so painfully unstable, is there really nothing to be learned? Is the image of Christ that we embrace so true to the original; are the maxims of conduct that shape our lives such perfect copies of his code; are our conceptions of his nature and his work so free from distortion and delusion, that all these years of thought and trial, of wandering and strife, and aspiration and achievement, can serve us neither for warning nor for help?

But, you suggest, have we not the Bible? May we not, interpreting our experience in the light of holy writ, learn all we need to know? Brethren, the moment you reach the Scriptures you are on historic ground. The Bible is not like the Koran, the product of one man; it is the outcome of an amazing national existence. Centuries of marvelous inspiration stretch from Moses to St. John. And between the Scriptures and ourselves intervene nineteen centuries of human interpretation and speculation. The astronomers tell



us that the planet Venus is surrounded day and night by clouds. If there are intelligent beings there fashioned like ourselves, they never saw the sun. They never saw the starry firmament. They have reasoned, perhaps, to the existence of a great luminary outside their world; they have possibly seen in their atmosphere bursts of strange splendor, and constructed for themselves theories of an outside universe, mysterious and grand. But one dispersion of their cloud-land would sweep their science into the oblivion of a glorious sunshine. Just such a dispersion of the clouds of speculation was the Reformation. Under the glorious compulsion of a burst of light the intervening screens were swept away. But only for a season, for their nature is always to return, the sources of them being not in the Light of the World, but in the recesses of human pride and human imagination. Hence, if you purpose to enlarge and illuminate your own experience with the word of God, be sure that you take that word in its purity, not as it has been refracted and distorted by intervening controversies, or by unscriptural and unnatural modes of interpretation.

But you may suggest another short method of making good your claim to speak for Jesus Christ. You may say I am a member of a religious body; its doctrines I believe most firmly, and it is enough for me to be stubbornly loyal to the system which I have accepted, and to which I give my mind and heart.

Ignatius Loyola is perhaps the finest instance of such procedure, and certainly there is a power in it

not to be despised. Never to question the correctness or the value of the system to which you belong, to accept it just as it is, seeking only to get the uttermost result of it, devoting your energy of mind and will to its extension and its triumph, will test alike the system and yourself. Only this, too, requires uncommon genius and grace. Of course, to comprehend the workings of a system sufficiently to see how it may be used for one's own behoof is not so very difficult. That is the problem of the practical politician, and requires neither genius nor piety. But so to seize the spirit of a system and the law of its development as to detect at once all tendencies to disorder and decay; so to understand its relation to existing circumstances as to keep it not only alive but powerful and fruitful; so to share the divine purpose in which it originated as to resist unto blood every diversion of its energy to improper uses; never to mistake its excrescences for growth, the fevers and excitements of the present hour for the essential workings of its primal impulse; all this requires a powerful intellect, a mental intrepidity, and a moral courage quite too seldom found in this world. It is easy to say "I am a Catholic," "I am an Independent," "I am a Presbyterian," "I am a Methodist." Too often that means only, "I will be the organization. I will shape it to my own image and purpose; I will make it the creature of my thought and will; I will yield to its movements as the vessel does to the waters and the winds; mighty as their movements are, they shall

guide me to my chosen harbor!" And how few who abandon themselves in absolute devotion to an organization of any kind escape this ever-present temptation. God is a jealous God! He punishes any form of idolatry with destruction from His presence. Be slow, therefore, to believe that you have either the political or the spiritual genius to grasp the divine significance and purpose of your organization without a study of its origin and development. Beware, too, of confounding the Methodism of your native village with the great historic movement which has swept around the world. And be you ever so humble and ever so wise, how will you escape the fiction-monger who comes to flatter you with his legends, and the controversialists with their suppressions and their combinations, their cunning reconstructions of a past that never was present, their pictures of men and women who never drew the breath of life?

But, brethren, ask yourselves this question: Do these words of St. Paul in this magnificent charter of Christian thought, does the recorded practice of St. Paul warrant any preacher of Jesus Christ in such a life of intellectual narrowness and denominational isolation, in such perpetual repetition of one's own first experience, or such an absolute abandonment to the traditions of one's childhood and to the system in which one happens to be born? Paul found himself face to face with Jew and Gentile both. The Jew demanding of him reasons for his daring innovations upon the ancient faith, even the Jewish Christian

looking on astonished and perplexed; the Gentile, on the other hand, challenging him to demonstrations of his wisdom and his power! In our age, which resembles the apostolic age much more than we are wont to imagine, the preacher of Jesus is compelled to reckon with the other forms of his own belief, compelled, too, to reckon with all beliefs and the philosophies, the skepticisms and tendencies of the world outside his own experience. From both sides there will be pressed upon him the question: How came your particular form of faith to have a being and a place in the complex scheme of human society? And let him not think to suppress or to evade the inquiry. Our age is getting to be fiercely earnest on these matters. Rich as may be your personal experience, persuasive as may be your appeals to come to the waters of life, your fellow men will hold you firmly to the mental horizon of your time; they will not suffer you to escape in nebulous phrases; they will compel you to answer plainly touching your right and authority to speak for Jesus Christ. Somehow your experience of the ever-living Jesus must be connected with the historic manifestations of him and his disciples through the centuries. You will be required to show, as your fathers were not required to show (for their environment was wholly protestant), you will be required to show just how your experience of Christ is related to the experience of your contemporaries, and how both you and they are related to the whole communion of saints.

Now, of course, you may make this explanation easy by accepting or inventing fiction; the world of fable and of legend is always close at hand, and its gates are open night and day. You may construct a legendary Methodism, a legendary Protestantism, a legendary Christendom, as the emergencies of controversy may require. But in that case you will not justify your own form of faith and worship; neither will you explain the divided and distracted state of the religious world; nor will you contribute the least impulse to the unity of believers; saddest of all, you will not offer to the candid inquirer the faintest explanation of this bewildering and discordant Christendom from which he fears the Prince of Peace has long ago departed. For just this disposition of men to reshape the historic Christ to meet the exigencies of some existing quarrel, just this disposition to restate the meaning of his life according to their own minds or the needs of their own systems, and to reinterpret prophet and apostle after their own thought, and the needs of their own party and their own locality—just this disposition to substitute fable for fact, and gloss for text, has been the fruitful cause of all this delusion and confusion. While Christianity has been reshaping the world, the world has been dividing and reshaping it. Greek philosophy and oriental speculation, Roman life and Teutonic energy, Slavonic patience and Celtic excitability have all felt its power, but they in turn have recast it to their natures, adapting it to the law of their minds, and

of their social progress. For the gospel is not the lump, it is the leaven. It must work amid such surroundings as exist, and suffers from contact with so much error and superstition, so many perverse and sinful tendencies. And this unconscious transformation of the gospel which has taken place under the pressure of each new environment, of each new epoch, has been further marked by individual surprises. Master spirits have appeared in the church, swift logicians, fiery mystics, daring system-builders, bold critics, far-sighted organizers, subtle and passionate thinkers, poets, politicians, philosophers. In these we can see the gospel changing visibly and palpably before our eyes. The gospel of Origen, of Augustine, of Anselm, of Dante, of Hildebrand, of Master Eckhart, of Thomas Aquinas, of Luther, of Wesley, of Pascal, of Newman, how unlike they are! How different in statement; how different, too, in substance and effect.

Now if you are ignorant of this, if you do not trace out for yourself the genesis of religious systems, the origin of these ecclesiastical and doctrinal varieties, you will be at the mercy of every fiction-monger who assails you with his legends. For there are two kinds of ignorance, the learned and the unlearned. The one kind simply does not know, the other knows, but knows all wrong. The one kind is the healthy darkness of outdoors; the other is the darkness of the cavern with its damp and poisonous air. The one is often humble, slow to speak, eager to learn.

The other is full of arrogance and babble, glorious in parade and subtlety, powerful in assertion and appeals to prejudice. To this persistent and pretentious ignorance the monuments and documents of the past are of value, not for what they plainly reveal, but for what they can be made to yield by logical torture in support of the dignity and power of existing interests. New Testament canon, Nicene symbol, the Teaching of the Twelve, apocrypha or apology, Westminster confession or Methodist discipline, apostles, fathers, saints, schoolmen, reformers, heretics, all are exploited or suppressed with the same uncanny and uncandid eagerness. How far is all this from the peace of God and the mind of Jesus Christ!

For, brethren, every great historic movement has its vindication and its weakness in the facts from which it sprang, and the energy which gave it impulse and direction. This is as true in theology and in religious development as it is in politics, in philosophy, or science, or in art. Why, then, should men seek to deceive themselves about the facts? Unless, perchance, they are beginning to be ashamed of their origin, or have become a reproach to their own progenitors? Unless they are seeking to prolong a movement which has reached its termination, or to divert it from its natural pathway, or to magnify it far beyond its meaning and its worth?

But once you are reconciled in the peace of God to the facts of your origin, the glory and the purpose of the movement out of which you came begin to be

disclosed. You see it as it really was; not the work of angels or of demigods, but the work of men of like passions with yourselves. You see it, not like a New Jerusalem descending in splendor from the sky, but like land redeemed after fearful struggle from the sea, like a city builded first of mud, and then of wood, and finally of stone. Directly, too, you are reconciled to the facts of your own origin you begin to understand the maze of Christian movements of which your own is only one. As the fictions are cleared away, the real unity of the church, the communion of the saints, begins to stand out like the unity of humanity. Not a unity of form, but a unity of imperishable instinct, of unutterable longing, of painful blundering toward a blessed consummation, a unity struggling through diversity and hindrance like Milton's lion, in the tumult of creation, "pawing to get free." You will then become aware how narrow and how imperfect are the common conceptions of Christian unity, how vulgar and inadequate after all the vision of a visible order and a uniform administration; how glorious, on the other hand, that historic continuity which holds together the "congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the world," and through the centuries. Amid the tumult of human thought and the rush and storm of human feeling, you will recognize the voice of God; as the living stones are lifted struggling to their places in the mighty structure of human history



you will hear the cry of chaos surrendering to the sunshine. "The Lord is building up his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him."

Then that peace of God which passeth all understanding will make you just to others also. In the light of the truth you will humbly acknowledge God's image in saints of other names and other times; you will see the beauty of holiness, the virtue, the praise, the loveliness of those most different from your first ideals; even error will have fresh meaning for you, and over all the scene of struggling thought and feeling will radiate that charity without which no man ever saw the face of God in human history.

But, brethren, I urge you to these larger views for yet another reason. The age in which we live is marked by currents of thought in two distinct directions. The one movement of thought is toward an increase of power; the other movement is toward an increase of reality. Nikola Tesla stood a few months ago among the scientists of England, and, as the lightnings flashed in harmless splendor from his fingers, spoke of infinite and immanent energies which pelt each other in the air about us, and of a machinery of nature close at hand, so vast, so vital, so intricate, so tireless, so tremendous, that the momentary flash of it promised to his breathless auditors a boundless progress for the human race. On the other hand, "the history of our race, the history of the earth in which our race has lived, the history of the

vast system in which this earth is but an insignificant unit, are beginning to stand out in clear outline from the mists which hang around them." The Christian preacher of our time finds himself confronted with a generation demanding of him power, and clamorous for fact. In an age of miracles like this, marked by repeated inbreaks of visible and tangible energy, men will laugh away a powerless faith. The natural energy at our command is so tremendous that a puny supernatural would excite nothing but scorn and mockery. The Light of the spiritual world to which you point must be as glorious to the common eye as yonder solar orb, as mysterious and fathomless in His luminous depths as yonder fount of undulating power. On the other hand, an age of historic inquiry, an age intolerant of fiction and of legend, an age that photographs the spots on the sun, and deciphers the inscriptions cut by distant centuries, will not be satisfied with your traditions merely because you guard them in a sacred shrine, and will despise both you and them, if you resist the study of them, with panic-stricken anger.

The preacher of the gospel may not insist upon the historic aspects of his faith, and at the same time refuse to the documents on which he rests the application of scientific methods of historic inquiry. He may say exultantly, the gospel is more than history, it is the power of God unto salvation. He may say exultingly, Jesus Christ was, and he also is. He died, but he lives. But to the question, How is your

conception of Christ related to the mutations of the Christian faith through nineteen centuries; how is it related to the original documents of Christian history, he must give patient and courageous attention. Let the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep his heart and his thought in Jesus Christ; but whatsoever things are true, let him discover and ponder, and, at proper times and places, let him proclaim. Protestantism, I have said already, was a momentary return to the New Testament. But the clouds resumed their sway. Then came the great revival. A pentecostal burst of power drove away the wrappings from the darkened church once more. Whitefield, and Wesley, and Fletcher pointed bewildered men to the simplicity of the primitive faith, to the joys of primitive experience, to the purity of the primitive ethics, to the power of the Holy Ghost, to the Jesus of Paul and John, to the hidden glories of a conscious life in God. Protestantism and Methodism were both efforts to escape from the traditions of men, from the entanglements of ecclesiastical ceremonial, from the bewilderments of theological subtlety, from system-mongers, and legend-mongers, from pagan intrusions, and profane perversions, from dead opinions and corrupting practice. The sixteenth century rediscovered the Bible; the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries rediscovered Jesus Christ. But the devils I have mentioned are not easily cast out or kept out. Disguised as angels of light they return persistently to their former habitations, and

work the ancient mischief into newer and more attractive forms. The work which the reformers began ended in confessions and catechisms from which the Protestant conscience is yet struggling to get free; the energy of the great revival has been succeeded by the Oxford movement, and the cry of "Back to Rome!" All the more, therefore, do we need the peace of God to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, while we strive in candor, in patience, in humility to make distinct and clear to ourselves the story of that early church, the nature of that early Christian life. We know who Christ is; we must know exactly what he was. We must discover him in all the grandeur of his being and the fulness of his power.

At first sight the student of historic theology is apt to think that he can learn here only how not to discover him. It shows him the hermit and the mystic abandoned wholly to his emotions and his imagination; and we see Christ fade away into a dream, a vague mysterious outline, a splendid shadow, an adorable enigma, alluring men and women from the sanctities of home and the activities of society. It shows him the philosopher, the theosophist, the theologian abandoned to his logic, his speculations, his abstractions; and Christ becomes a cluster of strange terms, a trick of God to baffle Satan with, a startling solution of a problem that taxed to the utmost an infinite intelligence. It shows us the ecclesiastic, with his passion for pomp and mystery

and ceremonial, his longing for organic unity and visible miracle; and Christ becomes a consecrated wafer, a perpetual incarnation at the beck of human hands. It shows us the crusader full of fight and fury, swept forward to the Holy Sepulchre, and Christ becomes a banner, a battle cry, an angel of destruction, the invisible leader of mobs and armies, the terror of the heretic and infidel. It shows us the polemic, the inquisitor, the enthusiast; and Christ becomes a whirl of dust, a flame of fire, an aureole of splendor. Yet, beneath all this turbulence and ignorance, beneath this subtlety and speculation, beneath these survivals of pagan civilization, of oriental mysticism, of heathen passion, beneath all these enthusiasms and aberrations of bewildered humanity, the sympathetic and candid students of history will discover that Jesus Christ has been always potent, and potent according as he has been understood and exemplified. Here, if anywhere, the magnificent saying of John has found its illustration; men and societies have grown like Jesus whenever they have seen him as he is.

But if you reverse the words of Paul; if you read them: "The passions of Satan shall keep your hearts and minds in perpetual controversy about Jesus Christ. Whatsoever things are false, whatsoever things are profane, whatsoever things are unrighteous, whatsoever things are impure, whatsoever things are ugly, whatsoever things are scandalous, if there be any vice, if there be any

blame, think on these things," you will find, alas! enough to keep you busy for a lifetime. You might construct the history of physical science in the same satanic spirit; telling of astrology and alchemy; of ancient demonologies and mediæval magic, of the philosopher's stone, of the elixir of life, of perpetual motion, of epicycles and fictitious planets, of Kepler's angels and the Cartesian vortices ending it all by abusing heaven as a fraud, and nature as a cheat. What childish folly that would be! Tesla and Edison, Hertz and Helmholtz, standing in the places of their power would tell you: "We are the fruit and progeny of all this struggle after truth and fact. The old men dreamt dreams, but we, their children, see visions." In like manner, if you study the history of theological science and of the church, in the peace of God and the radiance of Christian love, you will see that the great thinkers and the great doers of the church have been powerful, not through their errors and mistakes, but through whatever truth they taught, whatever righteousness they wrought. One touch of the real Jesus Christ makes the whole church kin, and your heart will leap up within you as you hear the voice proclaiming: "All these, having obtained a good report through faith, did not receive the promise; God having furnished some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

For the contact of Jesus Christ with each successive type of human mind has made the meaning and

the power of him more distinct and wonderful, just as the contact of the light and lightning with each successive type of human mind has given us at last our radiant energy and our undulations of electric fire. Even the resistance to him has made the glory stream in splendor from his garments, as the skepticism of the changing epochs has challenged him to fresh demonstrations of his strength; as each arriving moral crisis of the nations has demanded some newer revelation of his saving grace; as each peculiar type of human character has displayed some overmastering impulse to be conquered, some subtle weakness to be strengthened, some unexpected fetter to be broken, some daring aspiration struggling for breath and life.

Members of the class of 1892: You must bear me witness at the judgment seat, whether I have taught you historic theology in this peace of God, in this breadth of Christian charity, in this fearlessness of fact, in this eager search for the riches and the mystery of God in human society and human thought. Our lives have flowed together for a moment, and now we separate; I to spend the remnant of my life in learning and in teaching, you to preach the word, the thought of God.

O brethren, do not preach sermons only; preach Jesus Christ. Preach him, not in doubtful disputations, not for controversy, but for consolation, not in hazy speculations, not in cold abstractions; but preach HIM, the ever-living, ever-loving, ever-helpful Christ. Let your learning broaden your minds and widen your

sympathies; let it strengthen your reason, and simplify your speech; let it turn your thought to sunshine, not to illuminated fog; tell the mighty thoughts of God as Jesus did in the language of the common people. Let your learning never separate you from the feeblest of your fellows; let it never darken for you the image of your Lord. Let your individuality be swallowed up in his glorious being; and do not, I implore you, dwarf him to the stature of an unprogressive mind. Learn from the revelations of him through these centuries of human society and human character how to preach him for your time. Clear your minds of cant, of eccentricity, of fictions and phantasms and vain imaginations, and preach Jesus Christ. Preach him in the meekness and lowliness of his heart; preach him in the grandeur of his death and the glory of his resurrection; preach him in the beauty of his conduct; preach him in the sublime exactions of his morality; preach him for the remission of sins; preach him as the power of an endless life. Preach him till little children gather about him; preach him till erring women fall and kiss his feet; preach him till trembling mothers bring their babes for benediction; preach him till conscience-stricken sinners pass silent from his presence, and money changers in the temple fly before his scourge. Preach him till Samaritan and heretic shall see the radiance of his loving eyes; preach him till centurions and magistrates shall bend beneath his power. Preach



him till the weary and the heavy-laden come to him for rest; preach him until his judgment throne stands out distinct and awful with saints and sinners trembling on either hand. Preach him as Peter preached him in the flush of pentecostal power; preach him as John preached him in the glory of his aged recollections; preach him as Paul preached him to Jew and Greek, barbarian and Roman; not with enticing speculations, but in the demonstration and the power of the Holy Ghost. Out of the depths of an experience growing richer, and a knowledge growing clearer and larger; out of the peace of God which passeth understanding, and the love of God which passeth knowledge; by gentle, lucid, and courageous speech; by judicious and heroic silence; by patience and fortitude and faith; by forbearance and by deed, preach him, the life and light of men. Do not surround him with artificial splendors, thinking to make him more attractive; do not degrade him to a puzzle and a problem, but preach him as he preached himself, the shepherd of lost sheep, the likeness of the Father, the friend of sinners, the redeemer of mankind.

Just before I wrote these final words, there was shown to me the letter of a distinguished German scholar, Dr. Muller, of Berlin, referring to the death of my honored and beloved predecessor. One passage of that letter is full of touching beauty. "To our departed friend gone home," the German archæologist exclaims, "I send as greeting one of the inscriptions

from the ancient monuments which he so delighted to study. 'PEACE BE WITH THEE.' Surely he makes answer with that other inscriptional greeting, 'PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL.'"

Brethren, Dr. Bennett was your instructor more than I have been, and rightfully he takes his place beside me here. His manly hand, I feel it on my shoulder! His rich, strong voice is overpowering mine. Clear as his vision used to be, the past is plainer to him now. What used to seem discordant and dissevered stretches out before him glorious in the blaze of perfect providence. In the accent of the New Jerusalem his benediction breaks across your future life and mine. PEACE BE WITH YOU ALL.

# SOURCES OF ERROR IN RELIGIOUS TEACHING



## SOURCES OF ERROR IN RELIGIOUS TEACHING\*

*Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.*—MATT. xxii:29.

THE text is familiar enough; so too is the scene from which it is taken. The Pharisees and Sadducees of Jerusalem are trying to entangle Jesus in his talk. There is a crowd about the young Nazarene; the cunning thing is to appeal to popular prejudice and especially to attack him with Moses. His enemies posed as saints, particularly the Pharisees. The scribes and lawyers were what we call theologians; students and expounders of the Scriptures; which were not then in everybody's reach. Manuscripts were too bulky. Much was of course committed to memory; much floated in the air; but the current Scriptures were selections only, incrustated with traditions and interpretations, numerous, inharmonious, often subtle, frequently absurd, seldom helpful.

Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus in the wilderness; the Scribes and Sadducees quoted it to Him in Jerusalem; each for the same purpose and in vain, to confound and destroy Him.

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The Sadducees appealed to Moses in order to disprove the resurrection. Why not? Nowadays men appeal to the universe and its laws in order to abolish God; or to the marvelous human body in order to disprove the existence of the soul that informs and controls it; or to the words of Jesus Himself to defend what He condemned and to denounce what He required. This trick is an old one. Turn the truth of God into a snare; make the inferior and collateral commandment destroy the superior and principal revelation; "it is as easy as lying!" And so these Sadducees pounced upon a peculiar provision of the domestic law (a provision that every one of them would have evaded, if he had found himself disagreeably involved in it), and discovered in this provision, a disproof of immortality. A pitiful business to be sure! But the devil is not altogether dead! nor has he ceased to use the Scriptures, in person or by proxy.

And, therefore, it seems proper and even necessary to speak to you a final word about the sources of error in religious teaching. There are two of them: I. Ignorance of the Scriptures; and II. Mean Conceptions of God.

#### I. YE DO ERR NOT KNOWING THE SCRIPTURES.

FIRST. Note, however, that the ignorance of which Jesus speaks is the ignorance of the learned. There is no fool, said Hobbes, like an Athenian fool. The trouble with men that write books, said Walter Bagehot, is that they know so little; which is even more true of

men that make speeches and deliver lectures. Perhaps the chief waste of the world is the intellect that is squandered in defense of falsehood and absurdity; the intellect that is ruined in perversion of truth and its corruption, and the waste of life that follows. Many a humble saint who cannot pronounce the unfamiliar Scripture names correctly, who has never heard of Yahweh and the Hexateuch, knows more about the Scriptures than the haughty scholar who finds mysterious meanings even in the specks upon the pages of his Hebrew Bible. Now, what is the explanation of this ignorance of the learned? These Scribes and Sadducees are only a small section of the procession whose smoking torches have darkened the sky and blinded the eyes of every generation. Well! Jesus has given us the reason. They make void the Scriptures with their traditions; the Bible is not the source of their doctrines; it serves only as proof of them. Cardinal Newman propounded this view in his extremity, and the Jesuit Father Clarke has followed him bravely in his recent articles on the continuity of the Catholic doctrine. This, they tell us, was not derived from the Scriptures; it was given to the true church by Christ and His apostles. It is eternally the same, however surprising the phases of it that are progressively unfolded under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The proposition has only one defect; it is not true. The Bible contradicts and disproves it. It or the Bible must be surrendered. For this was precisely the error of

which Jesus accused the Scribes. They made void the Scriptures by traditions.

And what Scriptures did they nullify? The Master comprises them in a phrase, "The weightier matters of the law;" the eternal mandates of righteousness in which Jehovah had embodied His will. St. Paul, with wonderful depth and clearness, points out that the carnal mind, the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, that it is not and cannot be subject to the law of God. There you have the secret of all corrupted truth. The ten commandments, the sermon on the mount, excite the hostility of the mind of the flesh. The problem becomes not to explain but to evade them, to maim them, or to twist them to a contrary sense. How can this be done? Since the meaning of the record is so plain and the purpose of the mandate is equally clear. Call up tradition! Establish an authority! Listen to Rabbi ben Jacob and Rabbi ben Judah and Rabbi ben Ichabod! These are the inspired teachers of the law. But is not the fifth commandment plain and peremptory? And was not a dreadful threat mingled with its sublime promises? Does it not read without equivocation, "Honor thy father and thy mother?" "Oh! Who are thou, foolish boy, to contradict the elders of Israel? Go at once, simpleton, with Corban to the old people and take their receipt in full!"

Need I remind you, brethren, that the history of Israel and the history of Christianity are both polluted with this slime of the carnal mind? Like worms whose



eggs have been deposited in some precious manuscript, so these traditions eat through the noblest revelations; and, what is worse, the crawling insects are worshipped as though they were divine. Take, for instance, the confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Every one of them is stained with the blood of civil war. There is much in them that is noble and sublime; there is much in them also of human passion and human obstinacy and human error. They contain, indeed, the faith of our fathers; but they contain also their folly. Now, if we follow our divine Master we will separate the law and the prophets from all traditions that destroy their meaning and impair their power. For He arraigned, in unmistakable terms, the theologians of Israel. He accused them, as He did Nicodemus, of not knowing the fundamental spiritual teachings of Moses and the prophets; He accused them of not understanding the great event that determined the career of Moses and the destiny of Abraham's posterity, the revelation of the burning bush! Indeed, His conflicts with them can all be summed up in the single clause: "Ye do not know the Scriptures."

Doubtless they alleged often enough, that they knew them better than He did. And certainly they possessed a kind of learning that He never displayed; although His knowledge of the Scriptures overwhelmed them so completely. But it was not their sort of knowledge. All that the evangelists record as quoted by Him from the Old Testament can be

printed on two pages of an ordinary Oxford Bible. It was not the number of His citations, nor the quantity of Scripture that He recited; but His honest use of it, and His divine interpretation of it, that quenched the Scribes as sunlight quenches candles. How proud yonder Sadducee is of his subtle argument! How he delights in his fictitious widow with the seven brothers bound to her in the future world! How plainly, so he reasoned, Moses had refuted by this provision, this new nonsense about immortality that some innovating Rabbi must have picked up in Babylon. To be sure, the haughty Sadducee had no use for the weightier matters of the law. He did not study either Moses or the prophets to ascertain the will of Jehovah or the truth of life. Moses meant for him the sanction of his own ideas, a body of proof for his own prejudices, a system of excuses for his own habits! And alas! Thirty centuries of the history of the Bible abound in similar abuses of this great boon. And the bewilderments of theology have been the inevitable consequence.

Second. Another and no less fruitful form of ignorance Jesus pointed out in this discussion: The elevation of a temporary prudential enactment into an eternal law. This marriage code to which the Sadducees appealed was never intended, surely, to deny the immortality of the soul. Arrangements like this for marrying the widow to her husband's brother were a part of a temporal economy and even the noblest

forms of such relationships cannot outlast the transient conditions from which they spring. Love is eternal. But the relationships that have developed it, will pass into something sublimer and diviner, said Jesus: "In heaven they neither marry nor are given in marriage; they are as the angels of God." Now, this continual reference of all questions to paramount and eternal principles is the method of Jesus in dealing with the Scriptures. And it is also the method of Paul. The Old Testament is to them a depository of eternal truths; but truths embedded in a history, every phase of which was marked with stiff-necked, hard-hearted resistance to their application. And to mutilate and paralyze these truths Sadducees and Scribes fastened upon the accidental and the transient. The rest was easy; the principles were soon of no effect. How this has wrought ruin in modern times, one example will make plain. The Mosaic legislation touching slavery, like that concerning the cities of refuge, is on the face of it a remarkable effort to ameliorate a habit that was universal in antiquity. Here was a concession to the hardness of their hearts. Here also, the beginnings of freedom! And yet forty years ago this country was flooded with arguments from learned theologians expounding slavery as a divine institution. Moses and Jehovah were both dishonored. Because the transient enactments of progressive legislation were made to obscure the very principle from which they proceeded and Almighty God was held to be the institutor of a

system which the record proves he had started to abolish.

This is but one instance out of many. Jesus pointed out to James and to John how to avoid this fatal error. "Command," they urged Him, "fire to consume the Samaritans as Elijah did." His answer was twofold. Remember what truth you have to reveal and what spirit ye are of. Remember, too, Elijah's circumstances! you have neither his difficulties nor his duties. You are my disciples; you are to declare and to illustrate good news; we are come to save men's lives, not to destroy them. Frequently in the Old Testament the deed comes far short of the principle pleaded for its justification. Thus the famous plea of Samuel "to obey is better than sacrifice" is eternally true, but he is fatally in error who draws as Cromwell did, a vindication of inassacre from the pieces of Agag that fell before the angry prophet.

Men tell you sometimes that they want the old, old Bible. But which old Bible do they want? The old Bible of the Scribes and the Sadducees or the old Bible of Jesus and the Apostles? The old Bible with its torn leaves, stained and worm-eaten by Godless traditions or the old Bible recovered and restored by Him that spake as never man spake? Which of the two do they desire? The Bible of the Sadducees and Scribes that denies immortality and sanctions slavery and abrogates the ten commandments, that shelters liars and permits adultery with its easy

divorces, that accepts long prayers from them that devour widows' houses and compounds with hypocrisy for gifts to the temple; or the old Bible that teaches from Genesis to Malachi the righteousness of God and the righteousness of faith? The old Bible of Rabbi ben Ichabod, from which all the glory has departed, or the old Bible of Rabbi Jesus and Rabbi Paul, the Bible of faith and hope and love?

Distinguish, though, this carnally-minded subtlety that seeks defenses for rotten institutions and rotten practices in transient enactments from the inspired subtlety that discovers eternal principles in unexpected places. No one, before Jesus, had found an argument for immortality in the words spoken to Moses from the burning bush. And yet it was always there to be discovered. No one before Paul had stated the meaning of Israel's history as a whole, and yet it is plain enough after he has expounded it to the saints at Rome. The great German thinker, Lessing, speaking of these words of Jesus about immortality, declared that the argument can be expanded into a series of incontrovertible propositions, but Lessing would hardly have made that out by himself. Only as students of the Scriptures start out to find the principles, the living indestructible soul of the Old Testament, do they approach the mind of God. And only as they discover those principles, will they, in my judgment, come to an understanding of the singular and difficult history in which they are embedded. Hence there can be no more fatal

mistake than to subordinate the principle to the history, or, what is far worse, to some current conception of that history which happens to dominate the literary world. When the people ask us for bread, we must beware how we give them stones and scorpions! The Old Testament abounds with truths of sublime and eternal import. Jesus recovered and illuminated these. He separated them boldly from the traditions that obscured them and from the circumstances of their first proclamation; disclosing their divine origin by revealing their permanent significance. In doing so he blended marvelously His reverence for the earlier teachers with His reverence for the voice of His Father speaking within Him. There is indeed a deference to the old; but also a calm assertion of His own superiority even to the greatest of the prophets. The story of the accused woman perpetuates this characteristic. This is true whatever be our view of its right to a place in John's gospel. Moses said: "Let her be stoned." True enough, replied the Master determined upon mercy, then let the unstained hands begin. "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." It would carry me beyond all proper limits to attempt to draw up for you a system of the principles that underlie or rather pervade the Old Testament writings. It can be done, though, and when properly done it will exhibit those principles in conflict with the carnal mind of Israel; just as a system of New Testament principles will exhibit them in conflict with the carnal mind of

Christendom. What I insist upon is that you shall not mistake in either case the perversions of the carnal mind for the revelation that it perverts and corrupts. And further, that you shall follow your Master's example and seek in every case for the divine truth that is eternally paramount and overrules all apparent precedents.

Eternally paramount! How difficult that is to grasp! "Upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." And yet how few there were, how few there are now to believe it. Men jumble their beliefs together and insist that one is as important as another. And after awhile they are found straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel. The posture of the body in prayer becomes of more consequence than the purity of the soul, and the creed of the tongue more significant than the creed of the heart. And so at last we have those museums of contradictions and incompatibilities that some men call their doctrines. They are not systems of theology at all. They are theological curiosity-shops, in which human opinions, antique and recent, are labeled divine revelations; and the comments of learned ignorance are spread out ostentatiously as the discoveries of an infallible science.

Discover and hold fast to the eternally paramount,—in the Old Testament to the revelation of the Unity, the Personality, the Righteousness of God and to the expectation of Israel; in the New Testament to the revelation of eternal love

in Jesus Christ. These are the central revelations upon which all others depend. To these all the incidents of a progressive unfolding are of necessity subordinate. The revelation is not contained in the incidents of history or the peculiarities of individuals, and if you attempt to distil it from these you will be more likely to distil poison than the elixir of life. Hold fast to the eternally paramount! Just as the men of science hold fast in their investigations to the unchallenged universal laws of nature. Thus only can you hope to discover and to discard the irrelevant and erroneous. And having rid yourselves of these, you will move rapidly to unexpected treasures. New light will break forth from the old pages. The voice of God within you will reaffirm the truth recorded in the ancient documents. Discord will dissolve into concord. The clouds and the darkness about the throne of Jehovah will melt away into righteousness and judgment. The magnitude, the splendor, the historic power, the indestructible moral and spiritual grandeur of the oracles of God committed to his chosen but rebellious people will overwhelm and overawe you and like St. Paul you will exclaim in the joy of your discovery, "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God."

Third. Jesus restored the Scriptures in another way. He interpreted them honestly. Even when traditions are discarded, even when transient enactments and historical incidents are separated from the eternal principles around which they cluster, it is still possible



to ruin revelation by interpretation. I once heard a learned judge boast that a statute could not be framed which his court could not nullify. And alas! there is no truth, however sublime, that cannot be degraded to vile uses or distorted by misinterpretation. "Do you believe in doing to others as you would like them to do to you?" says the greedy boy to his sister. "Well then give *me* both oranges!" How the voracious urchin typifies a whole host of commentators! Although not unfrequently we hear these scribes begin their deliverances with the most extravagant adoration of the law and the prophets. And while the air still quivers with the echoes of their worship, they proceed to maim and kill the truth of God.

There is the allegorical company who can read out of the Scriptures or into them anything that the necessities of their craft or their contentions seem to require. There is the proof-text company who by destroying the continuity of the record and by cunningly rearranging their assorted scraps of Scripture can make out a case for almost any proposition. And now-a-days we have the historical company with their literary attachment who are in grave danger of forgetting that the commonwealth of Israel, like any other commonwealth, was vastly more important than any theory of its constitution; that the principles, the moral and spiritual *momentum* contributed by Israel to the world, are the real wonders to be explained. To be sure, each of these methods has a value. Jesus, for instance, spoke in parables; but He never muti-

lated either commands or principles by converting them into parables. And I beg you to ponder the reason Jesus gives for speaking in parables. It applies in my judgment to the entire Scriptures. It is involved in the very nature of a revelation that shall be permanent and progressive on the one hand, and yet on the other applicable to existing circumstances. He told His disciples that He did not wish his parables to be understood easily by the multitude. He wished them to be heard, to be remembered, to be pondered. This has been the divine method of instruction. First the bright specks in the sky; then after centuries of investigation, the measureless stars, the tremendous mechanics of the celestial world. And what is true of the allegory and parable is true also of the proof-text method. Jesus used this continually. He used it in His temptation; He used it in His controversies. But note how He used it. He selected always passages that contained eternal principles. "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." "Go and learn what this means, I will have mercy rather than sacrifice." Used as He used it, the proof-text method is absolutely safe. When, however, some inferior catch-word or some favorite theory serves as a kind of magnet to get congenial scraps together, the structure of the Bible is forgotten and the purpose of revelation is defeated. Hence I would rather trust the marked Bible of some dear old saint who under guidance of the Spirit selected

the passages that fed and replenished her famished soul, than any ingeniously constructed system of proof-texts, marshalled to support some ostentatious human theory.

“But we have changed all that,” you say. “We have discovered the infallible method. We have the real magic, the golden key that opens all mysteries. We have the historical and literary method; we have Biblical science, now!” Indeed! Brethren, forgive me! But I must quote it just once more. “God has no pleasure in fools!” The Scriptures do indeed contain history and literature. But they are the archives of successive revelations without which neither Christianity nor modern belief can be explained. In the order of God the ideas firmly embedded in these Scriptures have shaped the religious education of the world. And when the modern scribe forgets this he gives us only a new and baleful blunder. “*Die Weltgeschichte ist das Welt-gericht*,” the Germans are fond of quoting. “The history of the world is the judgment of God.” The Hebrew Scriptures have been lifted in the course of ages by the Hand that rules all events into a place that no other book ever can occupy. Any theory, therefore, that treats them as mere history and mere literature is absurd. Science stands hard by the obvious fact; science explains the present world. The Hebrew Scriptures have been declared to be the oracles of God by the progress of the human race. They enshrine within them the Holy of Holies of the modern

world. They are the Shekinah of the modern Israel in their present wanderings; they are the existing witness of the Ancient of Days, of the Self-revealing God, who has been the dwelling-place of believers in all generations. This unique position of the Hebrew Scriptures in the development of humanity makes it impossible for a genuine science to accept any theory that fails to explain it. A system of optics, however plausible, that ended in denying the sun as the source of sunshine would furnish its own refutation to all except its teachers and their infatuated pupils.

If then the modern biblical scholar would not produce more error than he removes, the historical and literary study of the Scriptures must be pursued, as we pursue the study of light, to get a better understanding of its divine character and a complete control of its power. I am asked frequently if I am afraid of the new method. It is like asking me if I am afraid of dynamite or electricity. Certainly I am afraid of them in the hands of agitators and fools, or of vacillating imitators and innovators who mistake the buzzing in their brains of a new idea for a train of reasoning, and the echo of a famous name for the demonstration of a theory. But I am not afraid of the new method in the hands of devout and sagacious men. They will investigate the historical and literary form of the revelation in order to make it plainer and more efficacious; they will recognize and maintain as Jesus and the apostles did, its paramount principles and its paramount purposes. The unlearned and the unstable wrest these to their own destruction; so, too, do the

conceited and the pseudo-erudite, the idolaters of false tradition and the prophets of novelty. And thus the fountains are poisoned. Men have succeeded in polluting everything that God has given them. They pollute the water and they pollute the air and they corrupt their own blood. And God is busy with His oceans, and His lightnings and His sunshine keeping the old world decent and habitable. It is not wonderful, therefore, that men corrupt His revelations, and handle the word of God deceitfully. Never, brethren, never poison the wells of everlasting life!

## II. YE ERR NOT KNOWING THE POWER OF GOD.

This is the second source of error that Jesus named. The enemies of the Messiah paraded as saints. They appealed to the Scriptures of which the scribes were the official expounders. And yet their conceptions of God were mean and sordid and despicable. They denied immortality and supported their denial with the words of Moses. Their God was too feeble, too mean, too selfish to raise the dead. How could a God small enough to find room in their cramped souls be grand enough to plan eternal life? And yet they pretended to derive their notions of Jehovah from the Scriptures. But they did not. They obtained them as you obtained yours, from parents and playmates, from the school and the synagogue, from public opinion and expert exposition. The Scriptures had been given that conceptions so derived might be regulated, purified, ennobled, perfected. In-

stead of that they used the Scriptures to defend their errors and to justify their meanness. And they have their successors in every generation.

In the order of God we are born helpless and ignorant babes. We are born into a stupendous physical world and into a stupendous social world. Both were here before we arrived. Gradually we discovered the sunshine that revealed our mother's form and features and the face that gave meaning to the sunshine. And then we discovered ourselves, the inner world across which flash the images of time and the thoughts that wander through eternity, and among the latter is the thought of God. Home expands to the neighborhood and the neighborhood to the nation and the nation to humanity. And with each new circle comes a new thought of God. Sometimes it expands to a horror; sometimes it over-arches you like the sky, a daily and a nightly splendor full of glorious suggestion, a challenge to discovery and to righteousness, a source of strength and joy, an ever-present mystery, a promise of eternal life and power. And then sometimes it dwindles to a dream. For the multitude that surrounds you is polyglot and discordant; it chatters and doubts and disputes and denies and dreams and demonstrates. For you as for Moses the learning of Egypt does not fit in easily with the stories of mother and sister. And so the image of the Almighty wavers and grows dim. And then you exchange the narrow nursery for the outdoor world and out-doors expands into the Universe

with its magnitudes and its mysteries, with its multitudes of living species and its multitudes of restless molecules and at each remove into the vaster and more wonderful you find your conceptions of God changing, enlarging, vanishing, reappearing. The firmament shows you his handiwork; but what are you to think of HIM? And then the world within you! The pleasures of sin entice you. The voice of conscience entreats you. Heavenly visions demand your obedience. And according to your decision in these moral crises does the God of your father and your mother approach or recede, bless or abandon you.

Now God has ordered that the true conception of Him shall be framed from the thoughts of the good people that live about us, and have lived before us, from right views of nature, and from the suggestions of a pure heart: the voice of the saints, the voice of conscience, the voice of science, blend together to pronounce aright the ineffable name. But if the saints are spurious, if the science is false, if the conscience is defiled, then His name perishes and evil imaginations take His place. Indeed, if any one of the three happens, the conception of Him weakens and wavers. And seeing that there is always danger of a corrupt church, of a spurious science and of a polluted heart; so there is always danger of forsaking the fountain of living waters and hewing out for ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. Therefore the Scriptures are *scriptures*: therefore the word

of God has been *written*; made permanent like *Magna Charta* and the great constitutions for which nations have struggled so desperately. Thus they serve a double purpose, they are a standard and a challenge to all that speak for God. The language of the prophet demands of us to think our deepest and our noblest and to compare our conclusions with all recorded revelation. "His ways are not as our ways and His thoughts not as our thoughts but as the heavens are high above the earth so are His ways higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts." And wherever the Scriptures have been studied with the method and the mind of Jesus these qualities of standard and of challenge have been clearly disclosed. For then it appears, how over against all possible corruptions of the carnal mind God has reiterated his invisible personality and his immutable righteousness; how over against the multitude of superstitions and the uncreated molecules of philosophical speculations He has asserted His eternal unity and the majesty of His eternal purpose; how over against the wickedness of men He declares their responsibility and their freedom and unfolds the severity of His judgments and how over against the bewilderment, the fear, the ignorance, the sorrow and the sin of humanity He reveals His mercy and His loving kindness. So that even though the communion of saints should dwindle to a dim-eyed remnant, even though in the progress of science the God that rules the sky should be forgotten in the multitude of stars and molecules, even though



in the stress and struggle of life, the still small voice should die away to a confused murmur, these ancient records would abide.

There they are; and there they will remain. They challenge the churches to vindicate their doctrine and their conduct. They challenge the conscience to fidelity and summon the nations to judgment. But they in turn are challenged by the communion of saints, by the science of the wise and by the conscience of the pure whenever they are overlaid with spurious tradition and false interpretation. The Mediaeval scriptures that Luther challenged, he challenged in the name of honesty and righteousness; his was the cry of a conscience sure anyhow that the Bible was never meant to sanction wickedness. When Calvin's heart told him that he was ascribing to the Father of Jesus Christ "a horrible decree" he ought to have recognized the still small voice within him and revised his exegesis. When the telescope of Galileo revealed the crescent-shaped Venus, it was time for his inquisitors to remember "the God of things as they are" and to read their Bibles with unscaled eyes.

And if it be objected that such dependence upon co-operating influences must lead to uncertainty and instability, the objection is easily disposed of. For this is God's method of imparting knowledge. He gave man five senses for the discovery of the outer world and we know it all the better because of the manifold endowment. Surely we do not see less

accurately because the sense of touch supports and corrects the sense of sight? Hence the prophets and Jesus himself make frequent appeals to conscience and to intelligence. "If ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children." "Consider the lilies of the field." What are these but appeals to the heart and the understanding? And it is the New Testament that erects the communion of saints into an authority, informed and guided by the Holy Spirit. Every powerful error is the shadow of a great truth; and the papal doctrine of infallibility is only a corruption of the declaration that God abides with them that love Him and keep His commandments; and that the Comforter shall guide the faithful into all necessary knowledge. Brethren! You have heard and you shall hear often the words of Jude: "Contend earnestly for the faith for all delivered to the saints." When you hear those words turn to the letter from which they are taken and examine the unholy forms against whom the writer is warning his readers: "Unholy men who have crept in unawares, who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, who deny Jesus Christ, the one only Master and Lord. Murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts with their mouths full of swelling speeches, admiring men's person for the sake of gain." This is the company of heretics Jude warns the disciples to resist. Put, therefore, the emphasis where it belongs, on SAINTS. For these are the guardians of the faith.

And then if in the confusion of the coming century, if in the perpetual conflict of the new and the old, you are perplexed to know where to find the faith, hunt up the saints!

There is just this much truth in the doctrine of apostolic succession: the glad tidings of Jesus Christ, the ark of the New Testament, will always be found among those that follow Him to do His will. As it was with Moses, who chose to suffer affliction with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; so it was with Saul of Tarsus, who was not disobedient to the heavenly vision that commanded him to separate himself from his people and to become accursed for Christ's sake. And these are the types of men to whom the secrets of eternity are opened. The Bible was and remains a revelation made to the SAINTS; and in every age only the saints can understand it; only those who walk after the spirit and are led by the spirit. It was given not to philosophers and theologians, but to the saints; it was given not to the proud and the haughty, not to the rich and the mighty; it was given to those that walked by the light of God within them, of whom the world was not worthy.

Neither give place, brethren, to "the murmurers and complainers." The century now closing has not been a century of spiritual paupers. In every land the disciples of Christ have appeared, each following Him according to his conscience, and each presenting some forgotten portion of His revelation. I could

make for you a catalogue of familiar and unfamiliar names, taken from every continent of the round globe and from the islands of the sea—names of which I am sure every one is written in heaven because their works will follow them forever. Hunt up the Saints, I beseech you, whenever you are perplexed about the faith. They keep it not for show but for use. It is for them the power of an endless life. It streams not from their lips only, but also from their hands. They do not strive nor cry nor advertise nor parade; their faith is visible and creative. It removes mountains; it conquers hindrance; it overcomes evil; it brings back Christ; for He abides with them that keep His commandments. If these saints are sages also, learn from them the latest news about the universe and the latest news about society, for every theory of nature and every theory of humanity implies a conception of God. And although candid and courageous study of God's handiwork is a form of worship, it is only when the sage is perfected by the saint that his wisdom is illumined by the Holy Ghost.

AND FINALLY BE A SAINT YOURSELF!

Any science that mutilates your soul is a false science. Any theory that corrupts your conscience is a rotten theory. "Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord or enter into His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity or sworn deceitfully." Labor continually, contend earnestly for the faith delivered to *you*, in the hour of your holiest struggle when Christ ap-

peared to you also, bringing with him peace and joy and the garments of strength and the promise of eternal opportunity. For if your hearts are pure your eyes will be clear, and beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord you will be changed into the same image as by the Spirit of the Lord. And then you can say as was said so long ago, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in HIMSELF."

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# **JOHN WESLEY: AN APPRECIATION**





## JOHN WESLEY: AN APPRECIATION\*

JOHN WESLEY records in his journal that on December 18, 1783, he "spent two hours with that great man, Dr. Johnson." Two hours was a long time for him to spend with anybody, but he was very fond of the burly lexicographer. Unfortunately I have not Landor's skill, or I should write an imaginary conversation for these two old men; Wesley, then in his eighty-first year, Johnson six years younger. If one of them "made the little fishes talk like whales," the other made the whales talk like little fishes. They were in spite of that the best talkers in England, and strongly contrasted as they were in appearance and in temperament, they were alike in their candor, their piety, their courage and their love of common sense. Johnson, with his seamed face and strange contortions, had browbeaten many an interlocutor, but he never contradicted the man of diminutive stature, whose tranquil face and brilliant eyes and sweet but commanding voice, had conquered mobs and charmed multitudes. The great talker grumbled only when Wesley would not stay to finish the dialogue.

I begin here, for in any estimate of John Wesley, one must remember his natural charm. At home, at

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the Charter House School, at Oxford; in his societies and in his conferences; conversing, preaching; alone with strong men like Johnson, or facing listening thousands, he ruled, because he fascinated.

This magic was partly an inheritance and partly an added gift of God. For what is so often described as Wesley's conversion was not a turning round, but a transfiguration. Rare natural endowments—a penetrating yet poetical mind finely trained; a conscience exquisitely sensitive; a will, tranquil, active, and invincible—were enhanced by a remarkable religious experience. William Law's asceticism, his own high-church proclivities, the Georgia climate, his troubles at Savannah, might easily have spoiled John Wesley's temper and dwarfed his soul; but "the strange warning of the heart" which came to him, not in the period of adolescence, but in the prime of manhood (he was thirty-five when it came), restored to him the gladness of his boyhood and delivered him once for all "from the spirit of bondage again to fear."

Wesley was eminently social, cheerful, radiantly communicative and fond of folks, especially of the poor and the needy and the humble and the good. He learned German to converse with the Moravians; he learned Spanish to talk to some Spanish Jews in Georgia; he revived his French to carry cheer and help to the French prisoners at Knowle and Winchester. But although he revered knowledge and intellect and integrity and authority, he never worshiped purple and fine linen—the robes of bishops or

the coronets of dukes. He had derived or learned from his mother this respect for the soul within the clothes and could detect its presence in the garb of the convict, the rags of a beggar, the fustian of the laborer, or the raiment of a king. The fearless candor and helpful love of human beings that made Susannah Wesley the preacher for the poor of Epworth reappeared in her son, and made him the apostle of England. If the mother had lived in Lambeth Palace, she would have charmed by her beauty, her dignity and grace of speech, her strength of mind and character; and her touch would have quickened the Church of England. She spent her days, many of them, in cruel poverty at Epworth; but through her children she blessed the human race.

All the children of Samuel and Susannah Wesley were clever, but John was most like his mother. He was intellectual without affection or display. His opinions are often unconventional and daring, whether they relate to philosophy, to theology, to politics or art or literature. The annotations to Shakespeare, which his scandalized executor destroyed, his delight in Swift's "Tale of a Tub," for which his charming sister Martha scolded him, his remarkable edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost," his collection of moral and sacred poems, reveal the wide range of his literary sympathies; his brief introduction to his little dictionary is only one specimen of a wit—trenchant, tantalizing, chuckling. He could preach in German and in French, in Spanish and in Italian, and when

Oxford, with her classical traditions, was absolutely indifferent to physical science, he was trying experiments in optics and devouring eagerly the writings of Benjamin Franklin. Demanding reasons for everything, even when a child, every drop of his blood, red with his mother's independence, he might have wasted his powers in controversy, if an intense appreciation of life had not taught him the worthlessness of unapplied opinions. He found finally better use for his logic, his eloquence, and his wit, and retired serenely from the disputations into which he had been decoyed by the intensity of his convictions, the attacks of opponents, and his consciousness of dialectical dexterity. He was intellectually inquisitive and acquisitive; not subtle or profound, but acute, candid and comprehensive. He read books of all kinds, walking, riding, and occasionally sitting down. Leisure and he parted company quite early. He compiled books upon theology, history and science, boldly altering and abridging to bring them within the poor man's purse and understanding. He admired every kind of ability, including that of David Garrick. But he ridiculed unreality, smiling alike at the vulgarity of the conceited "bawling" exhorter, and the pomposity of the rhetorical French preacher, and declared with a chuckle that he was not shallow enough to satisfy a polite congregation. The strain of mysticism in him was of the intellect rather than of the soul. "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in our philosophy!" This he perceived with Shake-

speare and Plato rather than felt with Jacob Boehme and George Fox. His Oxford training made him expert in philosophy and theology, although it obscured more than it explained the Bible; yet we have his word for it that his opinions changed but little after his fortieth year. There was indeed no pliability in this singularly receptive nature; his career and conduct were influenced greatly by his environment; but the man himself remained the same.

The same yet not the same. The change wrought in John Wesley, like the change in Moses, or like the change in Luther, to whose words it was partly due—"the strange warming of the heart" was a change of feeling, not a change of will. It was the meeting of the human and divine in rapturous recognition. Those who think conversion a volitional act may learn to distinguish the spirit of bondage from the spirit of adoption when they consider John Wesley and St. Paul. Both of these in their earlier days thought verily that they were doing God service; both, however, lived in the spirit of bondage and were the slaves of the law; both were afraid.

This change of feeling, this expulsion of fear by love, marked an epoch in the life of Wesley and the world. It was a return to joy in the Holy Ghost. A false conception of piety had repressed and almost ruined Wesley's cheerfulness. He had been exact in morals, punctilious in ritual, rigid in self-denial, helpful to the needy, eager to do good; but after all, only

a scrupulous and timid servant. Now he heard himself hailed as a son; an unspeakable gladness thrilled him; and this he could not contain. Exulting over what seemed to him and his brother Charles to be a revelation, they went to extremes. "I wonder the people did not stone us," John afterwards declared. But enthusiasm for righteousness and religious joy could do little harm in the days of Fielding and Hogarth and Foote and Smollett. "Johnson," says Thackeray, "shamed Englishmen out of their irreligion." He did; some of them. But the Wesleys and Whitefield and the revival preachers shook the English masses with good news, with the offer of a present heaven, of an interchange of love, divine and human.

To organize this rapture was Wesley's great achievement; to convert it into permanent power for the welfare of the world; to multiply it into a universal joy. No one ever perceived more clearly how easily such rapture runs to waste; hence his differences with the Moravians. No one ever planned more wisely to utilize and to increase such rapture by constant activity. The machinery of Methodism grew; it was not made to order. All great machinery grows. But the growth is never wild. Intelligence directs each improvement to a definite end. Wesley's temperament was active. He had inherited his father's restlessness; but he had his mother's steady will. He had his father's poetic feeling, but his mother's practical sense; his father's gift for expression and his mother's genius for command. These combined to make him the

greatest traveler, the oftenest preacher, and the firmest ruler in England. It is an extravagance to say that he could do what he pleased with his people; there were frequent oppositions and many defections. But in spite of them he controlled absolutely an increasing company who would swallow his physic or come to be electrified, bought his books and kept his rules, built his chapels and sang the Wesley hymns, preached his doctrines, helped in his charities and philanthropies, and accepted his counsels in domestic and national affairs; who were in short the religious and moral dynamos of England from which flashed streams of living fire.

Wesley's theology accordingly was insistently practical. At Oxford he studied the fathers. William Law led him to the mystics. His contact with the Moravians and his knowledge of German led him to Luther and to Bengel. But in this, as in so many things, his mother predominated. Her great heart rebelled against prenatal decrees whether of perdition or of preterition; her pure conscience shrank from the contempt so frequently poured by the Calvinists of her day upon all good works as "filthy rags." It was after her heart that her son John said to Whitefield, "Why try to prove that God is worse than the Devil? Satan tempts only; he compels no one to sin." Even Toplady attacked Wesley for his insistence upon outward righteousness, and the line

"Nothing in my hand I bring"

is but the softened echo of a very bitter controversy.

As a Biblical scholar Wesley was far behind his younger friend, Adam Clarke; yet he was surprisingly bold in many of his notes to the Old and New Testament, while he had no patience with the uncandid exegesis that, instead of explaining, explains away the text. The collateral parts of Scripture hardly interested him. He was absorbed by the central truths. These could be verified. Experience sustained, clarified, illuminated them. The scaffolding is not the temple. "The Lord God and the Lamb are the temple." The God that built the world and rules the nations, that rescues the oppressed and breaks in pieces the proud; the God that justifies by a faith that is fruitful and fills the heart with hope, who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself and who is now visible to the pure in heart, perfecting his children in love; the God that creates and controls and convicts and converts, that never forgets the lowly and works all things together for good to them that love him—Father, Son, and Spirit; this was to Wesley the temple of revelation, the sum and splendor of the Scriptures. To verify them one must find this only triune God to the joy and strength of one's soul; to prove them one must accomplish the Divine Will that they reveal, in regenerated homes, and transfigured workshops, and redeemed communities, and ennobled nations; get this will done on earth as in heaven. It would do Wesley's followers no harm to discover that they have narrowed his conception of God and sadly neglected his ethical ideals. Nay, it



will do them great good to restore these in their grandeur and their purity and to recognize the unfaltering courage with which he applied them to the burning questions of his time; to the slave trade, to the treatment of prisoners and of paupers, to the care of orphans and the cure of the sick and the abolition of vice; to the help of the struggling, the defense of the weak and the education of the people. He would like, he said, "to join hands with God to help the poor man live." Yet he never condoned a cruelty or a cowardice or a crime, deeply as he pitied and loved the erring and the sinful.

Wesley's theology was by no means free from inconsistency, neither was his career. But like every great leader he suffers from the appellants who would shelter their absurdities under his authority. His career, however, when studied chronologically, is beautifully coherent; if he wavers, it is as a ship wavers when the billows are angry and the winds contrary; he yields as the skillful captain must to the compelling storm.

He started out early "to do a little good in the world." He was partly guided, partly driven, to do it in strange ways. The parochial system of England had no place for him, so he made "the world his parish." He loved the church of his country, but the bishops had no use for his societies and were blind to their opportunity. He loved the liturgy, but necessity drove him to pray extempore. He loved the indoor service, but necessity drove him to preach in the field

and in the churchyard. The people were famished for the gospel; he organized lay preachers to give them bread, and societies to unite them in Christian fellowship. These societies and preachers in England and America, impatient of neglect and opposition, clamored for separate existence; he struggled hard to save them to the church, and then, real statesman that he was, furthered their separation to prevent their disruption. His attitude toward innovation was thoroughly English; he recoiled invariably. But his mind moved swiftly and his heart was pure. He had none of the fatal obstinacy that damaged Luther and ruined Napoleon. He was not a genius; not even an intellectual giant. But he was a man of rare gifts, touched by the hand of God; the noblest child of a remarkable family, trained to righteousness at home and educated in the best schools of his country. These gifts, this companionship, this training developed a character of uncertain promise until a sublime moment opened for him a unique career. For the splendor of God in John Wesley is the absolute fearlessness with which from that hour of "the warming of his heart" he followed his conscience. He was not strong; he had more than one hemorrhage; but he dreaded not pain, nor illness, nor death. He was not rich, but he gave away a fortune; he was reviled and slandered shamefully, but he committed his reputation to God as he had trusted his body to him when stones and curses filled the air. Robbed of domestic happiness, partly by the action of others, partly by his own unwisdom, he was never sour,

nor melancholy, nor envious, nor seclusive. His relations to brothers and sisters were frank and independent, and at times enchantingly gracious, as at the marriage of his brother Charles. His presence brightened every home that he entered, and children delighted in his talk. Crowds greeted him in his old age eager to see, though they could not hear him. His last spoken desire was that his friends should scatter broadcast a sermon that he had just written on the Love of God; the strange warming of the heart lasted to the end!

Shall one magnify or minimize his natural endowments? Neither, as the Lord liveth. Rejoice rather that his powers, great or small, were given unreservedly to "doing a little good in the world." Rejoice rather that the grace of God multiplied them into miracles of beneficent activity.



**JOHN WESLEY, PREACHER OF  
SCRIPTURAL CHRISTIANITY**



## JOHN WESLEY, PREACHER OF SCRIPTURAL CHRISTIANITY\*

WHEN John Wesley was dying it pleased God to smooth his pillow with pleasant dreams; he imagined that he was preaching or leading class; faint murmurs for the most part moved his lips, but sometimes when his mind seemed brightened by the vision of a multitude, his voice astonished those about him by its strength. God was beautifully gracious to arrange it so; to order all things so that his indefatigable preacher should enter heaven preaching; and that his last words: "The best of all is God is with us," might be alike his greeting to the company he entered and his farewell to the company he left behind him.

The fact is interesting and instructive for another reason: it teaches in the most impressive way what to Wesley himself was the heart of his activity. He was, amid all his multifarious industries, ever the preacher of God's Word and the shepherd of God's flock. Whatever may be said about him as statesman and scholar, as writer and educator and philanthropist, serves to obscure rather than to illuminate him unless his beloved chief activity is made the explanation of it all. Much that has been written about him aforetime; much that has been written about him recently mis-

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\* An address before the Rock River Annual Conference at Aurora, Illinois, October 11, 1903.

conceives the man because it lacks acquaintance and sympathy with the preacher.

The historian, to be sure, must measure the great man by the effects that he produces upon his own and subsequent ages; but the historian never, if he understands his business, attributes all of these effects to conscious design. He knows that human agents produce results that often surpass and often differ from their intentions and their expectations. He knows, too, that the mightiest results have been achieved by men so wholly taken up with present duty that they have conceived of the future in the vaguest, though most magnificent fashion; conceived of it as the soldier who obeys orders eagerly, conceives of the victory to be achieved by his commander. These are they before whom the future floats as the great white throne of God. These are they that co-operate in the truest sense with the Great Marshal of events; the Maker and Builder of human destiny.

And John Wesley was of these among the chief. In the sense in which most public men are statesmen, he was not a statesman at all. Seldom has anyone taken so little thought for the morrow; seldom has anyone seen so clearly and fought so bravely the evil of today; seldom has anyone so daringly placed first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof; seldom has anyone so confidently expected God to vindicate the conduct of an honest servant by giving increase to his labor.

If, then, we would arrive at the man himself, if



we would know what kind of human being it was to whom God gave this increase, we must subtract from his labor all that God has added to it and study the laborer that remains. We shall find him simple and sublime; simple as a child in his conception of his calling, sublime as a seraph almost in the faith with which he accepts and prosecutes it.

This calling was to preach God's word wherever he could do the most good. Can anything be simpler than that? There were men in England, good men, too, who in those days set out to be bishops; there were also men in England, and for a time John Wesley was among them, who set out to be great scholars and thinkers; there were in England saints like William Law and John Fletcher who accepted humbly the work that fell to their hands, seeking no other opportunities. But John Wesley faced a singular condition. "I must preach," he said to himself; "I am ordained to preach by the authority of the church, which, so far as it means anything, is the authority of God. I am ordained to preach by the inward witness which has given me a message that burns like fire in my brain. Where shall I preach when the churches are closed against me? To whom shall I preach if not, like my father, to the people of a parish?" The answer that came was simple and yet by no means obvious at first: "I must preach where I can do the most good."

For there is a widespread opinion that Wesley liked the kind of life to which the grace of God con-

strained him. But this is a mistake. That he liked preaching is true enough; but that he liked field preaching he denied frequently. Quite late in life he declares that it is still a cross to him. He liked, he said a fine church and a soft cushion, and though he spoke banteringly of polite congregations, he might easily have reconciled himself to administering the See of Canterbury had he conferred with flesh and blood. Marvelous to tell to his successors, John Wesley's thoughts never took that direction; and the full significance of his answer to Joseph Butler, then Bishop of Bristol, cannot be estimated until we remember the intellectual greatness of the man to whom it was made and the absolute sacrifice of every church emolument and dignity that it involved. There is a pathos in this reply to the famous author of the "Analogy" quite too deep for tears—the pathos of a soul struggling with ecclesiastical restraints and yet longing to justify his conduct to a mind that he respected and to which he had appealed for naught:

“My lord, my business on earth is to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I can do the most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present I think I can do most good here, therefore here I stay. Being ordained a priest by the commission I then received, I am a priest of the Church Universal; and being ordained as a fellow of a College, I was not limited to any particular cure, but have an indeterminate commission to preach the word of God in any part of the Church of England. I conceive not,

therefore, that in preaching here by this commission I break any human law. When I am convinced I do, then it will be time to ask, Shall I obey God or man? But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile that I could advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls in any other place more than in Bristol, in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence, which till then I may not do."

All of John Wesley's previous life shines concentric in that outbreak of splendor; all the courage of his fearless paternal and maternal ancestors; all the influences of his training at home and school and college; all the impulses nourished and developed in the Holy Club and in his intercourse with William Law; all the power and the joy of the strange warming of the heart in Aldersgate Street; all the reflections that perturbed his active mind among the Moravians; all his fresh experience of God's working in him and in those to whom he preached; all the new light that was breaking from God's Word—all these were gathered together into that one luminous decision.

How thrilling the tone of Saul of Tarsus rising obedient to the Heavenly Vision! But the music of it is nothing compared to that of the overmastering outcry: None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

How beautiful is John Wesley listening to the words of Luther until his heart glows with divine fire! But how much grander is he answering so firmly and tranquilly the greatest churchman of his time!

It is said of Luther that when Staupitz had beaten down every other objection to the Wittenberg call, Luther pleaded his ill-health. In spite of Wesley's long life, he was far from robust in his younger days; and he might have urged a similar plea when Whitefield urged him to preach in the open air. Talking once with his brother Charles, the poet exclaimed, "If God would give me wings I would fly." "If God commanded me to fly," John quietly returned, "I would trust him for the wings." There you have the measure of the man. He did not plead his diminutive stature or his slender frame; he had not the wings of Mercury or the port of Jove; and his throat was weak for he had more than once expectorated blood; and the weather was cold and the winds were chill and the crowds were enormous and perhaps unruly. But the voice said "Cry," and "The Lord," says Whitefield in his extravagant way, "gave him ten thousand times more success than he has given me."

I am not of those that depreciate Whitefield. The results of his preaching were wonderful and the increase of them still continues. But he and John Wesley differed as much as Paul and Apollos and somewhat, I fancy, in the same way. No one probably ever listened to Apollos or to Whitefield without

wondering at the speaker's charm. But Paul and Wesley had each of them that combination of self-effacement and self-revelation which is the secret of persuasive speech; self-effacement in that they stripped themselves of every hindrance to their sole aim, self-revelation in that they laid bare their own hearts in order that they might the better win access to their hearers and achieve their great design. The quick eye of Horace Walpole detected the consummate art of which Wesley was an easy master; but that elegant trifler was stoneblind to the purpose to which that art was always tributary. This purpose, however, must rank first in any study of John Wesley as a preacher; to dwarf it is to misunderstand both him and the law of God that regulated the increase of his labor.

Wesley described this purpose often as doing good. This was a favorite phrase, and when we take his preaching in all its range of years and topics, it is by far the best description of it. He was always and everywhere the preacher and promoter of righteousness; so that the bitterest controversy in which he ever was entangled grew out of his insistence upon good works. The General Rules are an indestructible monument of the organized conscience of early Methodism. We are to do no harm; we are to do all possible good; we are, therefore, to attend diligently the means of grace.

Looking closely into this favorite phrase of our founder and our father, we discover that this right-

eousness, like that proclaimed by Paul, is the righteousness of faith, the goodness that flows from a life hid with Christ in God.

In the preface to the sermons published in 1747 he states that these contain the substance of what he has been preaching for eight or nine years past. Here, then, we can safely explore its characteristics. For what Dr. Rigg says about the difference in his written sermons and his oral preaching hardly applies to these earlier publications; many of these were preached substantially as printed, varied, of course, as congregations might require. A comparison of them with the texts and notices of his preaching that abound in his journals reveals clearly the central thought which determines every utterance. This is set forth in what intellectually considered is the greatest of Wesley's productions, the sermon entitled: "The Original, Nature, Properties and Use of the Law." Those who deny that Wesley is a theologian have never read this splendid discourse. They might as well deny the title to St. Paul. The conception of the moral law here displayed is the richest fruit of Wesley's thinking and experience. It is, indeed, derived from St. Paul; but the development of it is at once lucid, original and lofty. With the simplicity of Goldsmith, the perspicuity of Paley, and an eloquence worthy of Richard Hooker, he describes the moral law as "unchangeable reason and unalterable rectitude;" he traces it back of Moses and of Adam and of the angels to the eternal mind of God

“as the everlasting fitness of all things that are or ever were created.” “I am sensible,” he adds, “what a shortness and even impropriety there is in these and all other human expressions when we endeavor by these faint pictures to shadow out the deep things of God. Nevertheless we have no other way during this our infant state of existence.”

“The law of God is a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the divine nature; yea, it is the finest offspring of the Everlasting Father, the brightest efflux of His essential wisdom, the visible beauty of the Most High. With regard to man it was co-eval with his nature; but with regard to the elder sons of God, it shone in full splendor or ever the mountains were brought forth or the earth and the round world were made.”

It is, however, the fourth section of this remarkable discourse that reveals the theological basis of Wesley's ethical power. This section discusses the use of the Law. Its first use is to convince the world of sin, to slay the sinner; the second use of it is to bring him unto life, unto Christ that he may live. It drives us by force rather than draws us by love. And yet love is the spring of all. The third use of it is to keep us alive; it is the grand means whereby the blessed Spirit prepares the believers for larger communications of his spirit. “I cannot,” he continues, “spare the law one moment no more than I can spare Christ; seeing I now want\* it as much

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\* Want=need.

to keep me to Christ as I ever wanted it to bring me to him. Indeed each is continually sending me to the other, the law to Christ and Christ to the law. On the one hand, the height and depth of the law constrain me to fly to the love of God in Christ; on the other, the love of God endears the law to me above gold or precious stones."

When I hear even Methodist ministers lauding the ethical superiority of modern preaching I wonder from what materials they have framed their conception of John Wesley. The glittering ethical dissuatives and exhortations now the fashion are a return to the powerless platitudes of Scotch Hugh Blair; they are pretty talk for parade and sale; but Wesley preached to save. No man had greater contempt for what in his time and in ours is often applauded as a gospel sermon; and he uttered that contempt in sharper words than I would dare to use.† But this was merely incidental; the key-note to his own preaching and the power of it was this: The one way to Christ is knowledge of the Law of God.

In his journal he tells us of preaching from

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† Here are two specimens of it:

"If we only join faith and works in our preaching we shall not fail of a blessing. But of all preaching what is usually called gospel preaching is the most useless, if not the most mischievous."—*Letter to Charles Wesley*.

"Let some pert, conceited fellow bawl out some phrases about the blood and the people cry, 'What a fine gospel sermon!'"



his favorite text: Jesus Christ, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; he tells us, too, how he was moved with compassion for the rich who were present, to whom he made a particular application. And this brings us to another trait of John Wesley, the preacher. He talked to those before him; he preached not at but to the people. Nothing could be farther from his manly soul than "roasting" the absent for the delectation of his listeners. He aimed to convict and to comfort those at hand. His piercing eye searched the countenances that crowded round him, quick to notice every change of feature; and though he was never in a hurry with his applications, he never failed to make them and to drive them home. No wonder that when his soul was stirred within him, as on that September night at Gwennap, surrounded by ten thousand people, none speaking, stirring or scarce looking aside, he could not conclude until it was so dark that they could hardly see one another. Nor was he satisfied to preach in public only; he followed up his preaching with tender eagerness and was as keen to urge his disciples to perfection as to charm the unsaved to new life and happiness in Jesus Christ.

One of the earliest printed sermons of John Wesley is that preached in St. Mary's, Oxford, eighteen days after his strange warming of the heart, from the text, "By grace ye are saved through faith." Those

who imagine that the glow of that experience injured in any way his fine ethical temper should read these piercing words. "This faith is a recumbency upon Christ as our atonement and our life as given for us and living in us; it is a closing with Christ and cleaving to Him as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption; in one word, our salvation," But what is this salvation? It is (1) a present salvation, (2) a salvation from original and actual, past and present, sin of the flesh and of the spirit, both from the guilt and power of it.

"Never," he concludes, "was the maintaining of this doctrine more seasonable than it is this day. Nothing but this can give a check to that immorality which hath overspread our land like a flood. Can you empty the great deep drop by drop? Then you may reform us by dissuasives from particular vices; but let the righteousness which is of God by faith be brought in, and so shall its proud waves be stayed. There be those that can talk as sublimely of the law as those who have it written by God on the heart, but take them out of the law into the gospel, begin with the righteousness of faith, and those who just now appeared almost if not altogether Christians stand confessed the sons of perdition."

A sermon preached in 1763 on the Reformation of Manners discloses still another trait of John Wesley's power as a preacher; his clear perception that reforms are possible to those only whose conduct is nobler than their speech. There is something divinely

touching in Wesley's groaning after perfection and his humility in leaving to others the profession of it.\* The reason of this paradox is, however, quite obvious. Wesley weighed his words. He who objected to his people applying the epithet "dear" to God and Christ; he who would not insist upon another man's using the term "trinity," knew the full meaning of the term "Christian perfection." His ideal, scriptural and sensible as it was, and his belief in the power of God to work the miracle of righteousness when and how He pleases, never blinded him to his own defects of temper, trifling as they were, mere wrinkles in the garment of his flesh; therefore he was cautious lest he cause anyone to stumble. But now that his entire life is spread out before us nothing is plainer than this: John Wesley lived according to his doctrine and the joy that came to him he valued as the light upon his pathway, shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. His experience never dwindled to a recollection or even to a cluster of recollections; he expected God every morning as certainly as he expected daylight, and he never dreamed of asking anyone to do aught for God that he did not gladly do himself. Think of the old man of eighty-one "walking ankle deep through slush and snow until his feet were steeped in snow water nearly from morning till eve-

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\* "I have told all the world I am not perfect and yet you allow me to be a Methodist. I tell you flat I have not attained the character I draw. Will you pin it upon me in spite of my teeth?"—*John Wesley to Dr. Dood in 1767.*

ning" in order to collect £200 to get coal and bread and clothes for the poor of his society. This is but one instance of sixty years of a concord of deed with word that winged his utterances with electric fire. Cicero is right when he says that the perfect orator must be *bonus vir*, a virtuous man. His own career would not have ended in an eclipse of blood if his maxim had been made splendid by his example. Wesley's doctrine was. He knew that to save the souls of others he must get his own saved and show them what salvation meant in all its length and breadth and height and power and glory. Hence in this sermon on the Reformation of Manners, he describes with telling insight "what manner of men they ought to be who engage in such a design, and the spirit and manner in which it ought to be pursued." Idolaters of numbers and defenders of craft and cunning might profit from his description.

A favorite quotation of John Wesley's was Paul's splendid descriptive phrase, "The Faith that works by Love." Faith he had seen quite early must disclose itself in results; but it was the revelation of his great experience that the perfect efficiency of faith is possible only in an atmosphere of love. Just as the undulations needs an ethereal medium to produce light, so faith needs this divine medium to produce life; or to take a simpler illustration, just as our blood needs pure air continually, so faith must renew itself continually in the love of God shed abroad in the heart. Its miracles are wrought only through this

replenishing without which it pines and withers and dies. To see how clearly Wesley perceived this and how gloriously he proclaimed it, take another of his favorite themes, the Providence of God. Critics like Leslie Stephen, saturated with the superficial idea of law, so prevalent with a certain type of modern writer, amuse themselves by poking fun at Wesley's references to good and bad angels, and smile over what they deem his puerilities. They forget that Wesley simply insisted upon realizing what every Christian of his generation pretended to believe; they forget, moreover, that he shared these beliefs with Shakespeare and Kepler and Milton and Bunyan and Bishop Ken and Samuel Johnson; besides they never read his sermons to note how deep and solid after all is the basis of his confidence. "God," he says, "might act of course directly; he needs no instruments of any kind;" angels or second causes either. "Do you mean," he argues in reply to Pope's famous line "Shall gravitation cease if I go by?"—"Do you mean that the providence of God does, indeed, extend to all parts of the earth with regard to great and singular events such as the rise and fall of empires; but that the little concerns of this or that man are beneath the notice of the Almighty? Then you do not consider that *great* and *little* are merely relative terms which have place only with respect to man. Nothing is small in the sight of the Almighty that in any degree affects the welfare of any that fear God and work righteousness. What

becomes then of your general providence, exclusive of a particular? Let it be forever rejected of men as absurd self-contradictory nonsense." Clothed in our cumbrous modern phrase, Wesley's belief was in the Immanent God, immanent by just such agents and instruments as He might choose. But to Wesley it was a belief to live by—not a resonance of words. And he demonstrated it by a daring abandon of himself to God and whatever He might determine. They misread his journal who suppose that Wesley sees the hand of God only when things are going well or who mistake his pleasantries for solemn deliverances. Wesley sees the hand of God in all events, and trusts Him in all emergencies; smiles and shudders are often intermingled in his narrations for those that understand him. But whether smiling at the way in which God screened him by the large woman sitting on his lap; or composing his epitaph in his fifty-first year; or writing the story of his final decay when eighty-seven, it is always Immanuel, God is with us. If he had been struck by some death-dealing stone early in his career, he would have exclaimed with Stephen "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge!" If he had been haled to prison and held there like St. Paul he would have sung praises with or without some brother to keep him company. He might indeed say in later life "I feel and I grieve, but by the grace of God I fret at nothing," and in the exuberance of his joy lose all remembrance of his sorrows, but there had been moments when he needed all the staying power of the

presence of God which he preached so clearly. His soul was indeed so charged with it that the thrill of it electrified the listening multitudes. It was to him no glittering generality. It was the blood of his heart and the light of his mind, and the strength of his will and the peace of his soul.

The sermon that separated him from the pulpit of the University of Oxford is in many respects the most remarkable of these early publications. Like the sermon on Free Grace, its publication was compulsory. The theme of it, Spiritual Christianity, connects itself with the famous passage in the preface to his first volume of sermons published in 1747, where he describes himself so touchingly as a man of one book—words which were, so to speak, the afterglow of an experience that almost consumed him by its energy.

Oxford University, professedly a Christian school, the stronghold of orthodox opinion; Oxford, that should have been a city set upon a hill, a light to lighten every home in England; Oxford, whose doctors of divinity were fierce to defend the Bible even in their cups and who sometimes defended it nobly with logic and learning; Oxford University John Wesley knew to be a residence of rakes and idlers and debauchees. The fellows of All Souls College had been taunted when he was at Lincoln in 1733 by words like these: "I would willingly next pay a visit to All Souls College if I could find it. It used to be near Queen's, but if we may judge from the resorts of its members it has been translated over the way

and the Three Tuns Tavern is All Souls College." These precious creatures had abandoned all pretense of teaching. Lord Eldon saw a doctor of divinity, unable to support himself except by keeping one hand upon the library building on Radcliffe Square, walking round and round till rescued by a friend. "Oxford," wrote Cross to his mother sixty years later, "is a perfect hell upon earth. What chance is there for an unfortunate lad just from school, with no one to watch and care for him—no guide? I often saw my tutor carried off perfectly intoxicated." The Savilian professor of Astronomy died after drinking late at his own house with the Vice-Chancellor (who is the actual head of the University) and some others.

Wesley pondered these things in his heart, and his soul grew hot within him. He might have escaped the ordeal by paying three guineas for a substitute; he might have escaped it by preaching a harmless gospel sermon, adorned with erudition, polished and pointless, to use his favorite phrase, "orthodox as—the devil," yet enlivened with a dash of the usual enthusiasm. Or he might have preached, as Joseph Butler would have done, a lofty ethical discourse, expounding subtly and with stately rhetoric some noble virtue, leaving his hearers to applaud and forget it. For once in his life he might have donned the French frippery of Massillon and Bourdaloue or the style of Scotch Hugh Blair, "that popular representative of the last stage of theological decay, that



washed-out retailer of second-hand commonplaces, who gives us the impression that the real man has vanished and left nothing but a wig and a gown."

To tell the truth, John Wesley would rather have spoken to the rude multitudes of Blackheath or Gwen-nap or to a little company in some upper room of Oxford. But here was a duty and an opportunity. Here in St. Mary's, where Wiclif and Latimer had preached and where Cranmer had spoken the words that went far to redeem his earlier cowardice, here he must take up his cross and deliver his soul.

Let no one imagine that he approached the task without most careful preparation. The sermon, printed just as it was delivered, shows in every line of it the hand of a master. He had measured exactly every hostile force and with consummate skill had engineered the way, parallel by parallel, for his intrepid application.

The galleries were crowded with undergraduates eager to see the enthusiast, the Jacobite, the papist, the heretic, the hypocrite, the knave, the Jesuit, the atheist, the exorcist, the despoiler of the poor, the fanatic\* who was destroying the Church of England and turning the kingdom upside down. The floor was thronged with heads and fellows of colleges, with here and there a Methodist praying God for help and grace. Young Tom Warton, his eyes inflamed with genius and wine, was probably looking down curiously from above; Wesley's noble friend Isham, the rector

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\* All these epithets had been applied to him before he preached this sermon.

of Lincoln, and the learned Conybeare looked up anxiously from among the dignitaries; a few old pupils and companions sat expectant among the scoffing men that never knew the man that they derided. Wesley had prayed that he might speak with authority—to use another of his favorite phrases—the authority of love. And keen observers like Kennicott noted, instantly he began, the serenity of his features, the commanding sweetness of his voice, the grace and propriety of his few gestures. They noted likewise the unfolding of his argument, paragraph linked to paragraph by faultless reasoning, for although Wesley's greatness as a preacher was in the plainness and loving severity with which he applied the truth, yet he never applied it until he had unfolded it with the skill of which his training had made him master. Then, however, he spoke with a plainness, a directness, a courage, a holy energy never surpassed in the history of preaching.

At his sharp words: "Where does this Christianity now exist? Where, I pray, do the Christians live?" there was doubtless a stir among the undergraduates. Satire was not uncommon in the pulpit of St. Mary's and the lads would bend over eagerly to listen and to watch for shafts of ridicule. But Wesley was not there for fun. The murmur of amusement in the galleries, the frowning upturned faces of those below him only provoked him to tones of sorrowful entreaty. "Someone must use great plainness of speech towards you. Who will use this

plainness if I do not? Therefore I, even I, will speak. And I adjure you by the living God steel not your breasts against receiving a blessing at my hands. Let me ask you, in tender love and in the spirit of meekness, is this city a Christian city? Is scriptural Christianity found here? Are all the magistrates, all heads and governors of colleges and halls, and their respective societies (not to speak of the inhabitants of the town) of one heart and soul? Is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts? Are our lives agreeable thereto? I entreat you to observe that the question is not concerning doubtful opinions but concerning the undoubted fundamental branches of our common Christianity. And for the decision thereof I appeal to your own consciences, guided by the word of God." Never soldier bore himself more bravely in the shock of hand-to-hand encounter. Wiclif and Latimer never uttered words more quick and powerful. St. Mary's since then has echoed to the eloquence of Arnold and Newman and Liddon and Church; but no archer of them all has sent such flaming arrows with so true an aim.

O Oxford! Oxford! If thou hadst but known the day of thine opportunity! For the stone that the builders rejected has become the head of the corner. Little did John Wesley think when he sent "without delay" the notes of his sermon to the angry Vice-Chancellor that a future master of Balliol would describe him to freshmen of the nineteenth century as the Apostle of the whole English-speaking race!

John Wesley, I repeat, wrote of himself shortly after this sermon on Scriptural Christianity as a man of one book; but he has left us in no doubt of his meaning. In the ordinary sense he was a man of many books and I find even in his sermons references to Newton and Huyghens, to Pascal and Hutcheson, to say nothing of quotations from theologians and philosophers of every age and from ancient and modern poets, all the way from Anacreon to Pope.\*

In his sermon on the Imperfection of Knowledge he displays a remarkable acquaintance with the growing science of his time, treating it with his usual boldness and candor. Modern critics who scoff at his mistakes would do well to imitate Helmholtz in his noble essay upon Goethe's attempt to overthrow the theories of Newton. The giant of German science treats the great but mistaken German poet with as much respect as candor. And Wesley, who had the powerful authority of Leibnitz and Huyghens to support him, might indeed be pardoned for balking at a

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\* One of the most striking and pathetic of these quotations was taken from his lips by the poet Crabbe, who heard him quote it in a sermon at Lowestoft when Wesley was eighty-seven years old. The lines are these:

“Oft I am by woman told  
Poor Anacreon! Thou grow'st old.  
See, thine hairs are falling all;  
Poor Anacreon! How they fall;  
Whether I grow old or no,  
By these signs I do not know;  
But this I need not to be told  
'Tis time to *live*, if I grow old.”

theory which had trying difficulties for Sir Isaac himself. Michael Faraday, I am sure, never mocked the man who was scoffed at by the whole medical fraternity of his time for his belief in the curative powers of electricity; and who certainly deserves respect from the contemporaries of Roentgen and Finsen.

Here, though, is the notable thing: Wesley's knowledge and reflections were never used for display but were obedient to the truth of Holy Writ.

"Does anything in this book appear dark and intricate—I lift my heart to the Father of lights. I then search after parallel passages. I meditate thereon with all the attention and earnestness of which I am capable. If any doubt remains I consult those who are experienced in the things of God; and then the writings whereby being dead, they yet speak." In one of the noblest of his letters he insists: "It is a fundamental principle with us that to renounce reason is to renounce religion; that religion and reason go hand in hand and that all irrational religion is false religion." "Most of the traveling preachers in connection with me," he says in the same letter to Dr. Rutherford, "are not ignorant men. They know all which they profess to know. The languages they do not profess to know, yet some of them understand them well. Philosophy they do not profess to know; yet some of them tolerably understand this also. They understand both one and the other better than great part of my pupils at the university

did. I trust there is not one of them who is not able to go through an examination in substantial, practical, experimental divinity as few candidates for holy orders even in the university are able to do." And well indeed might he say this; for John Wesley himself was their tutor and their exemplar. He was no hallelujah centaur\* nor would he permit them to be such, and though his heart warmed towards men of blunt and fervent speech, he has left on record his scorn of French frippery and English platitudes.†

From the Bible he learned the way of life, and what he learned he taught. Despising no knowledge and no art that would help him teach it more effectively, he would not be decoyed into any kind of preaching that did not promote inward and outward righteousness. "A man may be," he says in his sermon on *The Way to the Kingdom*, "orthodox on every point; he may not only espouse right opinions but zealously defend them against all opposers and yet

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\* "I am no more like your picture of an enthusiast than like a centaur."—*Letter to Dr. Church*.

† Here is his opinion of "the Gospel preachers so-called." They "corrupt their hearers and vitiate their taste. They feed them with sweetmeats till the genuine wine of the kingdom seems quite insipid to them. They give them cordial upon cordial which make them all life and spirit for the present but meantime their appetite is destroyed, so that they can neither retain nor digest the pure milk of the word. . . . Newcastle, cold, weary, heartless, diminished, dead. Such were the effects of this Gospel preaching!" Dealers in the soda-water of life would do well to ponder these cutting words.

have no religion at all, no more than a Jew, Turk or Pagan. He may be almost though not altogether as orthodox as—the devil; and may all the while be as great a stranger as he to the religion of the heart. This alone is religion: The Apostle sums it all up in three particulars: righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Thus for more than fifty years John Wesley preached, instant in season and out of season, spreading with God’s own help a knowledge of His eternal law and the news of His eternal love in Jesus Christ. There were times, to be sure, as in 1775, when he felt impelled to preach on current events. Mistaken though he was in his views of the American revolution, his sermon on National Sins and Miseries is, nevertheless, a model for those who deal with public questions in the pulpit. Surely the chief thing for the minister of Christ who treats of social problems is that he display the mind of Christ, that whatever opinions he express be uttered without malice and in tender love, and that all his skill in persuasion be directed as Wesley’s was, to making his hearers deeply sensible how far their undoubted sins are the cause of other men’s misery.

No wonder, therefore, that his power as a preacher went on increasing to the end. The final entries in his journal reveal a child-like surprise that people crowd to hear him and his explanations of it are beautiful in their humility. But he never crossed the dead-line till he died. Indeed he never crossed it at

ail, for, being dead, he preaches still and shall forevermore.

Among the last records of his public appearances are two of surpassing and enduring beauty, illustrating as nothing else could the old man's might of character. In the one case he preaches a sermon to nine hundred children all arrayed in plain apparel and lovely, he declares, in face and song as the angels in our Father's house. What a picture it is: the beauty of age saluting the beauty of youth. The long hair that falls upon the old man's shoulders is still soft as silk but no longer auburn-black. Yet his eye is bright and his mind alert. Not a word of more than two syllables escapes his lips. He used long ones, anyhow, only when he must. But with the children he used them never. The authority of love has not gone from his voice though it is weaker than of yore and slightly tremulous. But the old lucidity of statement and arrangement holds firmly the little ones' attention; they watch him as I have seen children in these later times watch the play of an electric fountain, spellbound by the mingled beauty of his presence and his speech.

The other case is not so beautiful perhaps, but far more significant. The aged saint preached at Colchester in 1790. The house was crowded, galleries and floor. As he stood in the high, wide pulpit to address the awe-filled multitude two of his younger brethren supported his feeble frame. Henry Crabb Robinson, then a lad of fifteen, beheld the scene and



described it vividly long afterwards. "His feeble voice was barely audible, but his reverend countenance, especially his long white locks, formed a picture never to be forgotten. There was a vast crowd of lovers and admirers. It was for the most part pantomime, but the pantomime went to the heart; of the kind I never saw anything comparable to it in after life." He never saw anything comparable to it! There has never been anything comparable to it since the days of St. John at Ephesus. But a letter written by Robinson at the time shows plainly where the power lay. "Not knowing the man," the young lad wrote, "I should have almost ridiculed his figure. Far from it now. I looked upon him with a respect bordering upon enthusiasm." Ay! There's the glory of it. To everyone knowing the man his presence became a divine radiance and every gesture a benediction; the long white locks were mightier than those of Samson in his youth; and the sentences that now and then emerged from the steady murmur of sweet sounds seemed like an overflow from the invisible world.

Verily, verily, it was the accumulated amen of the good man's deeds that made his words, and even his whispers, so powerful in old age and after death. How numerous and varied and beautiful those deeds had been it was no part of my plan to narrate. Properly narrated, they should stir us Methodists to shame, to heart-searching inquiry and ardent prayer to God for a zeal and a method of activity befitting

our superior knowledge and to efforts proportioned to our means and our opportunities. "I am tired of opinions," John Wesley used to say; "I want life." Brethren, I am tired of statistics; I want purity of soul and nobility of conduct, a glorious rivalry of self-sacrifice, an outburst of ethical and spiritual energy, the victory of which shall overcome the world.

The Methodism of John Wesley was first an organized conscience and then an organized rapture. It bound together inseparably the eternal law of God with His eternal life in Jesus Christ. Its doctrine of perfection was the two great commandments. Its ecstasies were only incidents of the service that is sonship and perfect liberty. In vain shall we attempt to restore the rapture without the conscience and the conduct that it glorified; the preaching and the revival needed for this and every age is the preaching and the revival of scriptural Christianity.

# ABRAHAM LINCOLN



## ABRAHAM LINCOLN\*

JUST forty-six years ago yesterday, Abraham Lincoln parted from his friends and neighbors, "not knowing," he said, "when or whether ever I may return and with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington." And then he added: "Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail." He never returned; only the shattered tenement of him was given back to the people of Springfield. The man himself, his mind, his magnanimous soul, his patient, resolute, indomitable will, the indestructible Abraham Lincoln, had entered into the hearts of his countrymen and into the memory of the civilized world, there to abide, an energy for political righteousness, so long as freedom and fraternity remain emblazoned upon the banners of human progress.

Abraham Lincoln was always nobler than his surroundings and wiser than his companions; but there has been in many places, and not seldom here in this great state to which his name and that of Grant have given imperishable luster, a somewhat grudging recognition of his nobility and wisdom. His image has

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\* An address delivered on Lincoln Day, 1907, in Memorial Hall, Chicago.

been obscured by the out-breathings of men who thought that he was altogether such an one as themselves and who fastened upon the defects of his massive nature as though they were the substance of his being; men who were fain to magnify their own pettiness by creeping into some crevice of his character.

You will permit me, therefore, to begin with a paragraph from one of his early speeches, a paragraph that lives in my mind as the cathedral utterance of Abraham Lincoln, because I can never recall it without the vision of some mighty structure soaring upwards like the dome of St. Peter's or the spires of Cologne's beautiful temple into that ampler ether where a sublime human achievement is made glorious by the greeting of the radiant skies.

Speaking of the slave power, he exclaimed: "Broken by it, I, too, may be; bow to it, I never will. The probability that we may fail in the struggle ought not to deter us from the support of a cause which we deem to be just. It shall not deter me. If I ever feel the soul within me elevate and expand to those dimensions, not wholly unworthy its Almighty Architect, it is when I contemplate the cause of my country deserted by all the world besides, and I, standing up boldly and alone and hurling defiance at her victorious oppressors. Here without contemplating consequence, before high Heaven, and in the face of the world, I swear eternal fidelity to the just cause, as I deem it, of the land of my life, my liberty, and my love."

There is the key to the peculiar character of Abraham Lincoln. His soul was capable of infinite expansion; and under the inspiration of great opportunity and tremendous responsibility his soul did expand to dimensions not wholly unworthy of its Almighty Architect; but it was a soul whose final majesty, whose ultimate harmonious proportions were never quite comprehended by men who boasted that they, too, were hewn from the same rough quarry and who flattered themselves that they, too, might have expanded to the same grandeur.

Yet even these could not hide the fact that Lincoln had been always a being apart; friendly, sociable, kindly, helpful; but singularly, although not offensively, unlike his neighbors. The strength of a giant was the servant of "a heart as big as his arms were long." Like Garibaldi, the hero of United Italy, he could not bear the sight or sound of needless suffering. Bigger and stronger than any of his companions, he was the gentlest of them all. But the quality of his mind was wholly different from theirs; indeed it was of a quality exceedingly rare in the whole world. Lincoln had marvelous mental eyesight. He looked not so much at things as into them. His vision was not only accurate but penetrating. It was a vision unblurred by his own hasty fancies or his own wishes; and a vision undimmed by prevalent misstatements or current misconceptions; a vision never long perturbed by the sophistries of men skilled to make "the worse appear the better reason."

Speaking once of the declaration of Galileo that a ball dropped and a ball shot from the mouth of the cannon would strike the ground at the same instant, Mr. Lincoln said that long before he knew the reasons for it, it seemed to him that it must be so. Like Galileo, he saw the thing before and not merely after it was proved. He saw that the downward pull on both balls must be the same, and that the outward drive of the one had nothing whatever to do with the time of its fall. We may indeed wonder what might have been his career, if, like Michael Faraday, he had first read books of science instead of the Revised Statutes of Illinois or the Commentaries of Blackstone that he found in a pile of rubbish. Fate decreed, however, that this rare quality of penetrative wisdom should be applied to law and to statecraft—especially to the problems then challenging the thought of the American people. This vision, moreover, was not only penetrative; it was prophetic. He could foresee consequences as distinctly as he could discern realities. It was not pure guessing, when he exclaimed: "This nation cannot continue half-free and half-slave." It was a prediction derived from steady and consecutive vision. For, genuine logic, like the logic of Euclid that fascinated him, is after all a continuous seeing. Given the elements of a situation, the mind watches them as consequence follows consequence in sure and certain revelation. Never to befool oneself about an actual situation and never to befool oneself in reasoning upon it



—these are the bases of science, physical and political. And science is the modern almanac, the handbook of prediction. When men like Douglas were attempting to manipulate and thwart the laws of God which determine national destiny, Abraham Lincoln was humbly studying them in the spirit of Galileo and of Francis Bacon.

Daniel Webster once declared that it is wholly unnecessary to re-enact the laws of God. The saying, strictly construed, is true enough, but the implications of it, as Lincoln saw, are utterly false. We need not, indeed, re-enact the laws of God, but our statutes, if they shall work benefit and not disaster, must recognize and conform to them. The laws of God left to themselves leave us in impotence, and exposed to hunger, disease and disaster. All our mastery of the physical world depends upon our actively using, not upon our passively submitting to the laws of the material universe. In this sense every flying locomotive is a re-enactment of the laws of God; so is every telescope that opens to mortal vision the splendors of immensity, and every microscope with which we track to their hiding places the mysteries of life and death. So is every temple that we rear, every bridge that we build, every steamship that we construct, every mill that we erect and every machine into which we conduct the energy of steam or electricity. The whole progress of civilized man may be measured by the extent to which he has learned in his activities to obey and to employ the

laws of God. So, too, in the political world, the great structures that we call commonwealths must, in this sense, be re-enactments of eternal principles. If they are to be beneficent and not malignant, those who create and control them must learn the laws by which alone benign results can be obtained. Constitutions can endure and statutes increase the welfare of the people only as they realize and do not contravene the principles of righteousness and progress. Penetrating to this simple but tremendous truth, Mr. Lincoln obtained his vision of the future; his prophetic gaze swept the political horizon and discerned the inevitable.

And this foresight was both profound and far-reaching. In learned information his horizon might be termed a narrow one; but in his grasp of principles and of their ultimate and universal consequences he was broader and deeper than any statesman of his age. The only time I ever saw him was at the flag-raising in Philadelphia on Washington's birthday in 1861. I could not hear his voice, so great was the intervening crowd, but the words that I could not hear I have read and pondered often since.

"I never have had a feeling," said the predestined martyr for whom assassins even then were lying in wait, "that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence; the sentiments which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world for all future time. It was these that gave promise that

in due season the weights should be lifted from the shoulders of all men and that all should have an equal chance. And if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say, I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it." If this be narrowness of vision, then may God contract the eyes of American statesmen to a similar horizon.

Such was the mind of Abraham Lincoln, a mind that gravitated gladly to the truth of things; a mind that loved light and hated darkness; a mind that found rest only in eternal principles, and inspiration in prophetic visions and exalted political ideals.

Possibly under different surroundings he might have become a renowned scientist; more probably through his radiant and steady intellect united to his great heart would have made him even under other conditions a supreme statesman. For the scientist seeks chiefly for causes and is satisfied to find and to show them; if he concerns himself for beneficent results, as he often does, these are not his principal quest. He searches for the seeds of things and delights to see them grow. The statesman, on the other hand, seeks first, last, and always the welfare of the people. And Mr. Lincoln loved the people, craving their happiness and hating oppression even when it assumed the form of law. Monarchs and oligarchs strive mainly to perpetuate their privileges and to increase their power; even in republics there be those who usurp free institutions in order to

enlarge their wealth and to entrench their tyranny. Mr. Lincoln perceived too clearly and felt too keenly the burdens of the common man ever to become the active or the passive instrument of any power that would abridge his liberties or diminish the opportunities of his children. The Declaration of Independence, so often mentioned in his speeches, he recognized as the embodiment of the principles that determine all political progress. Human governments are sanctioned and favored by Almighty God, so long, and so long only, as they promote the welfare of the people and further the progress of mankind. Directly they become instruments of oppression, or strongholds of tyranny, they provoke the judgments which are righteous altogether, when "the wealth piled up by unrequited toil" shall be sunk in the divine wrath "and every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword."

And he recognized himself, humbly and gladly as a product of the principles that he defended. Freedom had made it possible for his own soul to expand to dimensions not unworthy of its Almighty Architect. One need only to read the story of modern Italy, of her exiles and her patriots dying in dungeons and upon the scaffold, to see how utterly impossible would have been such a career under the Italian skies. It is enough to make one weep tears of blood to know  
• the tremendous price that the descendants of Dante

and of Galileo paid for unity and liberty. And her Garibaldi grew strong in the shelter of our Declaration of Independence. But a poor lad like Abraham Lincoln, even though capable of penetrative, prophetic and profound vision—a poor lad, awkward in body, homely in features and unaggressive in disposition, with no capital but his strong arms, his big heart and his luminous brain, could expand to proportions worthy of his divine Creator only in the bracing air of freedom and social equality. Nay, he could not have reached these splendid dimensions except in a free state of the American Union—not even in the Kentucky of Henry Clay, or in the Virginia that had ceased to think the thoughts of Thomas Jefferson.

Combined with these rare qualities of mind, Mr. Lincoln possessed a gift of exact expression that bordered on the marvelous. His fidelity of speech matched his fidelity of vision. He could say what he saw and make others see what he said. “Well! Speed! I’m moved!” he exclaimed with laconic humor after carrying his saddle-bags upstairs to his friend’s room. “Judge Douglas has the high distinction of never having said either that slavery is right, or that slavery is wrong. Almost everybody else says one or the other, but the Judge never does.” Such was the sentence with which he transfixed his dodging antagonist before the astonished people of Illinois.

“If one man enslaves another, no third man has

the right to object!" Into those thirteen words he distilled the malignant meaning of the Dred Scott decision.

"The central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy," such is the terse statement of the first inaugural, followed by a demonstration as lucid as the proposition.

Galileo used to say that God had written the laws of nature in geometrical characters; Mr. Lincoln believed that political principles could be stated with geometrical clearness, and he confronted his adversaries whenever great issues were involved, not by denunciation, but by illumination. If he could not show them he could at least show other people just where they stood and just what they meant.

It is to the enduring honor of the people of Illinois that they were large enough to recognize the expanding dimensions of this strong soul; that when this clear-eyed defender of liberty and union appeared among them their sight was sharp enough to see above him the beckoning hand of destiny. How long is the tradition to endure that handsome presence and sonorous voice, swollen periods, glittering platitudes, reckless assertions, delusive epigrams, and the sneers of the sophist suffice for popular leadership? They suffice only when the people are unworthy of great statesmen, or when inferior and selfish leaders are unopposed by clear thinking, plain speaking and intrepid action. They suffice never when a soul expanded by the inspiration of great principles

grapples with a spirit so swollen and heated with ambition, that it has grown indifferent to the dignity of its Almighty Architect. Douglas was skilled in the arts of plausible address, adroit, audacious, evasive, self-assertive, denunciatory; full of the forms of logic, yet reckless of the truth. How shriveled and shrunken he appeared when illuminated by the ever-expanding mind of his conqueror! Stripped of his pride, of his self-delusions, of the garments of party leadership for which he had surrendered the cardinal principles of democracy, how small the human remnant looked! His antagonist's soul had expanded to a temple of light; his own brain had dwindled to a gaudy tabernacle of ambitious craving and bewildering inconsistencies. "He bargained with us and then under the stress of a local election his knees gave way; his whole person trembled." Such was the railing accusation in 1860 of his accuser and fellow-bargainer, Judah P. Benjamin. How the accusation degrades them both, even after more than forty years. "He bargained with us and then betrayed us." Some day parties and communities will learn that men who betray their principles in a bargain will betray their purchasers in an extremity, wrecking themselves along with those that bought them.

Not Lincoln's mind alone expanded to dimensions worthy of its Almighty Architect, but his whole being took on majesty as he assumed responsibilities and set about a task which to him seemed even greater than that of Washington. His entire administration was a

protracted magnanimity. He was great in his forbearance as he was great in his performance. Often tempted to use his strength against men who, like Greeley, assumed an impatient and dictatorial tone; his endurance strained to the breaking point by schemers and place-seekers and the cormorants that batten and fatten in war times upon the miseries of the people; peering anxiously into the skies above him for some token of hope dropped from the hand of God; the Lincoln that once carried the village postoffice in his hat bore the destinies of millions upon his mighty heart and expanded to the stature of the suffering savior of the nation. He mastered his cabinet with serene self-control; he sustained with matchless generosity the successive commanders of the several armies, slow to change but swift to praise; with patient vigilance he studied the movements of the public mind, waiting for it to become the footstool of his great purpose of emancipation, while with the diplomatic skill of an imperturbable wisdom, he averted the perils of a foreign war.

But let me recall two dates that illuminate each other strangely and disclose the rare quality of Mr. Lincoln's magnanimity. On the 5th of August, 1864, when his re-election seemed doubtful and almost hopeless to himself, there appeared in the New York Tribune a three-column manifesto signed by Benjamin F. Wade and H. Winter Davis, two notable leaders of the Republican Party. "They had read," so they began, "without surprise but not without in-



dignation the proclamation of July 8th." "A more studied outrage on the legislative authority of the people," they continued, "has never been perpetrated." They sneeringly inquired "upon what the President's hopes of abolishing slavery through the nation rest." If he wishes the support of Congress he must confine himself to his executive duties, and they conclude with ill-concealed malignity, "the supporters of the government should consider the remedy for these usurpations, and having found it, fearlessly execute it." White as my hair has grown, there is blood enough in my heart to heat it with anger even now as I recall the gloomy August day of 1864 on which I first read these cruel words. They ought, as we knew long since, never to have been written. They were wrong, utterly wrong, and it was unspeakably mean to publish them when the destiny of the country was trembling in the balance.

Contrast now these self-righteous statesmen (for statesmen they were of no small stature) with the man that they assailed. They were imperiling the nation to satisfy their wounded pride. Mr. Lincoln's one thought was to save, to save, to save the Union.

On the 23rd of August he gave to the members of his cabinet, sealed, to be opened only after the election, the following memorandum:

"This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so co-operate with the President-elect as to save the

Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he cannot possibly save it afterwards."

O! gloriously expanded soul! O! temple of the Living God not unworthy of its Almighty Architect. Happy the people whose destinies in the hour of impending disaster are entrusted to a heart so big, a mind so clear, a will so patient and so adamant! No wonder, therefore, that his final utterances fall upon us with such benignity; that they seem more like the solemn music of infinite wisdom, and of infinite tenderness, than like the speech of mortal man. Did some still small voice within him tell him that he, too, must be a victim of that partisan malignity which he had never shared and never fostered, that it would be a part of the punishment allotted to his people that he should be taken from them, even before the mighty work was done and when as yet the need of him was very great? Brother Americans, we can repair that great loss only by entering into his spirit; not by statues of him of marble or bronze; not, God help us, by reshaping the image of him until it dwindles into something like ourselves, but by reshaping ourselves, our own souls, until they resemble his in its expansive power and ultimate nobility.

If he could return from that bourne from which, alas! the sages come not back to bring us wisdom, and frequent for a while the Union that he saved, how we should crowd around him! What honors and what

eulogies would we heap upon his transfigured form ! But after we had told him proudly of our territorial expansion, of our enormous wealth, of our splendid cities with their monumental buildings soaring towards the skies, of our flag, the symbol everywhere of a new world power, of our great industries and our colossal fortunes, I think I hear him ask : “But what of your men ?” Do their “souls expand to dimensions not unworthy of their Almighty Architect ?” Are they inspired by principles that enlarge them to divine proportions ? What about the Declaration of Independence ? Are its principles denied and evaded as they used to be, or are they cherished and lived up to and exalted ? Are its ideas of free government applied or are they being supplanted by those of class and caste and special privilege ? Are you deceived by forms and sonorous phrases ? By men who talk liberty and mean slavery ? By men who adore the Constitution with their lips while their hearts are far from it ? Do you fancy, I hear him ask, that because you call no man duke or king, you are, therefore, free and independent owners of yourselves ? That because you offer no man openly a crown, you are sovereign citizens and self-governing communities ? Have you not yet learned the difference between the forms and the power of self-government ? What about your worship of the Constitution ? There were men in my time who adored it in their speech and who were yet doing their utmost to pervert it and to destroy its value. Have the enemies of social justice revived the

old diabolical trick of interpreting it to defend oppression, or have the people mastered the divine art of reading it in the light of its sublime intention "to form a more perfect union and to promote the general welfare?" And what about your legislatures, state and national? Have they improved with your material progress? Are statutes carefully prepared and wisely considered? Do they enact the laws of God or the will of some powerful interest? Do they conform to immutable principles of political wisdom, or are hirelings and demagogues, misguided incompetents and ambitious leaders, all wearing the livery of freedom, still telling you that you can evade and thwart and even nullify with impunity the principles of righteousness and equity? Have your political leaders eyes, and can they see? Have they brains and can they reason? Or do they darken counsel with a multitude of words? Or shelter themselves in cowardly silence? Have they principles for which they are ready to be assassinated, or have they principles only for platforms or parade or purchase?

Fixing upon us those piercing and melancholy eyes, he would warn us to learn wisdom in the time of our power and our wealth and our opportunity, lest we, too, provoke the righteous judgment of God upon ourselves and our posterity. He would remind us with pathetic solemnity that all the miseries of those terrible years in which he suffered for us came from judicial blindness, from the sacrifice of conscience, and truth, and freedom of speech, to avarice and

ambition and the lust of power ; and lifting his hands to the "Almighty Architect" of his own expanded and transfigured soul, he would call upon us all "to here highly resolve that the dead shall not have died in vain ; that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom ; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."



JOHN MILTON

2011  
2012



## JOHN MILTON\*

“The work some praise,  
And some the architect.”

THESE are Milton's words concerning MULCIBER,

“Whose hand was known in Heaven  
By many a towered structure high,  
Where sceptred angels hold their residence.”

Suffer me to praise the architect and only incidentally the work.

The first edition of Milton's minor poems appeared in 1645. The frontispiece was an engraved portrait of a morose and rather stupid-faced Englishman, whose long hair, parted in the middle, fell down on both sides to the high collar around the neck. Beneath the picture one could read in Latin, “John Milton, Englishman, in his twenty-first year”; and in Greek, four lines furnished to the engraver in jest by Milton himself. Roughly translated, the poet's mischief reads:

“That some uncunning hand this face had carved  
Quickly you'd say, the living features seen,

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\* A paper read before The Chicago Literary Club, Dec. 7, 1908.

But finding here no trait of me, my friends  
Laugh at the bungling graver's sorry botch."

This was the beginning only of a fate that has pursued Milton down to our day. Marshall, the engraver, though, sinned without malice, while Samuel Johnson, most illustrious of Milton's subsequent detractors, poured out upon the citizen a brew of falsehood and spleen which no praise of the poet could expiate. For the poet had committed the greatest of crimes: he had taken sides in an internecine political struggle, and taken, too, what seemed to Johnson and Hume and all the Tories of England and of Europe, the side of traitors and anarchists who had beheaded statesmen and bishops, and finally a king, and in their revolutionary frenzy enfeebled for all time the sacredness of hereditary privilege and the efficacy of consecrating oil.

To understand Milton we must begin here. He was known to most of his contemporaries, not as a poet, but as a writer of political pamphlets at a time when, as the publisher of these minor poems declared, "the slightest pamphlet was more vendible than the works of learnedest men." Before this collection of poems was published, Milton's tractates upon reformation and episcopacy, the tractate upon divorce, and the *Areopagitica*, the speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing, had made their author notorious, rather than famous; he had provoked the wrath of Episcopalian and Presbyterian, of royalists and com-

promisers, in the days when ears were cropped and the headsman's axe was not unfrequently the final argument.

Not a few of his biographers declare with lofty self-complacency that Milton's pamphlets had scant influence upon the direction of events. This is true of all really great political writing; as true of Edmund Burke, of Wilhelm von Humboldt, of Francis Lieber, as it is of John Milton. For the really great political writer sees things from that ampler ether into which the lesser spirits never soar. His influence, moreover, asserts itself rather in the assent of the thinking few and in the resistance that he provokes from the interests he assails, than in the number of the admirers and adherents that he attracts. Milton was an independent of no narrow spirit, a Christian who belonged to no sect, a patriot who belonged to no party, a Puritan whose conscience reaffirmed the laws of God, often by defying the enactments and traditions of men. Independence like this can never become popular; and if supported by unflinching courage and resplendent genius, it is sure to be decried, denounced, misrepresented, and maligned. That Milton never feared the face of man, these pamphlets amply prove. That his genius transcended that of his contemporaries, Hobbes, Selden, Sir Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, to mention the immortals only, leaps to the mind of every intelligent reader of the *Areopagitica*. That he possessed the prophetic quality which is the very eye of inspiration,

three succeeding centuries have attested, for the principles that Milton championed and defended, even the principle that penetrates and redeems his treatises upon divorce, have become the commonplaces of our modern political and social creeds. Who believes today either in the divine right of kings, as held by Laud the bishop, or in the hereditary inalienability of a kingly crown, as held afterward by Blackstone the lawyer? Who now refuses sanction to Milton's noble contention that a true marriage must be something finer and diviner than a union of two bodies, that it must be a harmony of souls attuned to a concord of thought and purpose, a companionship of sorrow mitigated by love and of delights intensified by mutual participation?

Who does not share with Milton the desire and hope for that nobler ministry of truth from which the hirelings shall be driven by the lash of public scorn? and who, whatever be his belief or disbelief, does not thrill at Milton's picture of the coming of "the King who shall put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming his universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth; where they that by their labours, counsels, and prayers have been in earnest for the common good of religion and their country shall in superabundance of beatific vision progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity, clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss, in over-measure forever?"

Who would reinstate the censor now? But if it

were attempted, what better arguments to defeat it than those of Milton? "As good almost kill a man as kill a good book; who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." "Though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to prey upon the earth, so truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and falsehood grapple; who ever knew truth put to the worse on a free and open encounter? Who knows not that truth is strong next to the Almighty; she needs no policies, nor stratagems nor licensings, to make her victorious; those are the shifts and defenses that error uses against her power: give her but room and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus did who spake oracles only ~~when~~ he was caught and bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes except her own, and tunes her voice according to the time."

The speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing appeared in 1644, while the first edition of his minor poems was in press. But, as his publisher complained, the people were in no mood for literature, least of all for poetry like *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, or even for a work of perfect art like *Comus*.

Strafford had gone to the block, and Laud's head was unsteady on his shoulders; King Charles was nearing the battle-field of Naseby and the scaffold; an assembly of divines, meeting in the Jerusalem chamber at Westminster, were drawing up a confession of faith which might serve as an iron-clad test to separate the band of Gideon from Jehovah's enemies; sects were multiplying with diabolical rapidity, sixteen of them flourishing in defiance of the law. "We detest and abhor the much endeavored toleration," wrote the London clergy. "Parliament will graciously suppress all sects without toleration," petitioned the corporation of the city. Milton had already noted with his yet unblinded eyes that "New Presbyter was only old priest writ large," while Cromwell had uttered his noble and mighty words, "He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he would trust God for the liberty of his conscience." "From brethren in things of the mind we look for no compulsion but that of light and reason."

Our self-complacent aftersight enables us to see, now when three centuries have elapsed, that Milton the poet soars far above the pamphleteer; accordingly, with solemn arrogance we summon him to judgment for wasting his genius in controversy, deploring the loss of certain never-written poems. This vaunted aftersight is blind misunderstanding. Let us listen to the man himself! "As for the other points, what God may have determined for me I

know not; but this I know, that if He ever instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the breast of any man, He has instilled it into mine: Ceres, in the fable, pursued not her daughter with a greater keenness of inquiry than I, day and night, the idea of perfection. Hence, whenever I find a man despising the false estimates of the vulgar, and daring to aspire, in sentiment, language, and conduct, to what the highest wisdom through every age has taught us as most excellent, to him I unite myself by a sort of necessary attachment; and if I am so influenced by nature or destiny that by no exertion or labours of my own I may exalt myself to this summit of worth and honour, yet no powers of heaven or earth will hinder me from looking with reverence and affection upon those who have thoroughly attained this glory, or appear in the successful pursuit of it. You inquire with a kind of solicitude even into my thoughts. Hear, then, Diodati, but let me whisper in your ear, that I may not blush at my reply — I think (so help me Heaven!) of immortality. You inquire, also, what I am about? I nurse my wings, and meditate a flight; but my Pegasus rises as yet on very tender pinions. Let us be humbly wise.”

He thinks of immortality! And yet he accepts in early manhood “the lot however mean or high towards which Time leads him and the will of Heaven. All is, if he has grace to use it so, as ever in his great Taskmaster’s eye.” “For he was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his

hope to write well in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem." A believer in the majesty of man's free will, he was a believer, too, in that eternal spirit "who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out His seraphim, with the hallowed fire of His altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases: to this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs." Observation and insight he sought in Italy, and would have sought in Greece. But "the melancholy intelligence," he tells us, "which I received of the civil commotions in England made me alter my purpose; for I thought it base to be traveling for amusement abroad while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home." He had no love for controversy, especially in an age of brutal recrimination and barbarous cruelty; in fact, he hated it for its own sake and for the abuse and slander that it would surely bring upon him.

Listen again: "For, surely, to every good and peaceable man, it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands; much better would it please him, undoubtedly, to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness. But when God commands to take the trumpet and blow a dolorous and jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall conceal." "Which might teach these



times not suddenly to condemn all things that are sharply spoken or vehemently written, as proceeding out of stomach, virulence, or ill-nature."

"No man can be justly offended with him that shall endeavour to impart or bestow, without gain to himself, those sharp and saving words which would be a terror and torment in him to keep back. For me, I have determined to lay up, as the best treasure and solace of a good old age, if God vouchsafe it me, the honest liberty of free speech from my youth, when I shall think it available in so dear a concernment as the church's good." Moreover, he imagined his Master saying, "When time was, thou couldst not find a syllable of all thou hast read or studied to utter in my behalf? Yet ease and leisure was given thee for thy retired thoughts out of the sweat of other men. Thou hast the diligence, the parts, the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be adorned or beautified; but when the cause of God and His Church was to be pleaded, for which purpose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, God listened if He could hear thy voice among his zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast; from henceforward be that which thine own brutish silence hath made thee." This believer in immortality feared to be punished "in the shape he sinned," with everlasting "brutish silence."

His prose inferior to his poetry? Who knew this better than Milton? Who declared in the very last moment of self-immolation: "This manner of writ-

ing, wherein knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand."

Many in these later centuries have sympathized with Milton in his blindness; all the more because he lost his sight in the service of his country, writing the defense of the English people. But the left-handed Milton is no less a patriot than the sightless bard listening to Archangel ruined, or to the harpings and hallelujahs of the angels that renew their strength in glimpses of God's face. Nay, the sacrifice was even greater. It consumed the best years of his life; he was thirty-three when he wrote the first, and fifty-two when he wrote the last, of his controversial pamphlets. They cost him his eyes and the use for two decades of the wonderful right hand that wrote the *Paradise Lost* and the *Samson Agonistes*. Does the history of poetry or the history of patriotism anywhere record a nobler sacrifice? Milton was neither poor nor greedy; he was rich enough to write poems at his leisure; like Socrates, his wants were few. He was never physically strong; there was no guarantee, human or divine, that he would escape captivity or the scaffold, or live to old age. Yet he placed upon the altar of English liberty all the poems teeming in his prolific brain, all the thoughts that wandered through eternity. But God, who in the ancient story at once inspired and refused the sacrifice of Abraham's child of promise, the God of Milton, gave back to him and to literature the offered

song, the guerdon of his unshaken faith, and the poem lost in the turmoil of the revolution was regained amid the revels and the persecutions of the Restoration. As the Stuarts remounted for a brief space the throne of England, to cover the stains of their father's blood with darker stains of immorality and cruelty, then Milton soared serenely to the throne of the immortals, to sit down with Homer and Lucretius and Dante and Spenser, not the least of that illustrious company who brighten with celestial splendor and soften with celestial melodies "the smoke and stir of this dim spot that men call earth."

Misread him not, however. His was no unpremeditated sacrifice, made in ignorance of consequences. It is Milton's glory that he counted the cost correctly, even to the slanders that would be heaped upon him, and that he paid it notwithstanding. He knew his age and its favorite methods of reply, the prison and the pillory, and when these were not possible, abusive lies and slanders. Here is an early specimen. "Of late, since he was out of wit and clothes, he is now clothed in serge and confined to a parlour, where he blasphemes God and the king as ordinarily erstwhile he drank sack and swore. Hear him speak! Christian, dost thou like these passages? Or doth thy heart rise against such unseemly beastliness? Nay, but take this head . . . Horrid blasphemy! You that love Christ, and know this miscreant wretch, stone him to death, lest yourselves smart for his impunity."

True, we owe to this abuse those radiant bits of autobiography, imbedded like jewels in the controversial pamphlets. Milton never skulked, as many do even in our time, behind the plea that a man's character has nothing to do with his opinions. For Milton, a man's bad character discredited his opinions, especially where moral issues were involved. Skilled musician as he was, he would have scoffed at those who, albeit music-deaf, chatter glibly of the concord of sweet sounds. Apostates from liberty, tyrants and sycophants, hirelings and bribe-takers, he believed, were not inspired to instruct free Englishmen in civil or religious duty. To unmask them was, therefore, to refute them. If he himself were such, he had no duty, nay, not even the right to speak. Therefore he replied to his slanderers with noble self-revelation, an example followed in our day by John Henry Newman in his powerful and successful *Apologia*.

And what manner of man did he reveal? The loving son of a very noble father, himself an out-cast from the paternal home for his opinion's sake. Trained to knowledge and music and independence by this same father, who had acquired wealth by intelligence and industry, and sent by him to Cambridge that he might prepare to serve the Church.

A Puritan in his youth, but not of the kind sculptured by Saint Gaudens, or even of the Cromwell kind, but one that loved Shakespeare and adored Spenser, who delighted in music and in the friend-

ship of noble souls, whose strength was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure. A shallow critic of Milton's *Comus* declares that Milton could not draw ugliness: "It turns into beauty or majesty in his hands." He could draw it easily enough, but never with love, always with loathing. *Comus*, like Satan, the Serpent, tempts chastity with beauty, and only at that entrance was Milton himself exposed to evil. Ugly wickedness repelled him; meanness and cowardice enraged him. A born poet, he was also a born artist; like Dante, taking infinite pains to acquire technical perfection. Like Galileo and Pascal, rebelling at the pedants who controlled the learning of his time, he was none the less a student, whose prodigious memory was the ready servant of a puissant and far-ranging intelligence. Not tall, but lithe and erect; his slender frame carrying a shapely head crowned with light brown hair, which clustered about an oval face beautiful in form and color, and luminous dark-gray glittering eyes whose glitter changed to glow when thoughts were surging in his brain or feeling rising in his heart. A sweet and tuneful voice made his speech and song attractive, while a playful irony blended with a serious cheerfulness to brighten all his talk. After fourteen years of preparation for it and witness of its administration, he refused to enter the Church. "He who would take orders must subscribe himself slave and take an oath withal." God's servant he would be most willingly, and man's too, for that matter. But long before the

German poet Arndt had written it, Milton felt that God who made the iron grow in the hillsides had little love for slaves. His noble father, one of the noblest in human annals, although reluctant, yielded to the scruples of his beloved son, who spent six years more in quiet study and fifteen months in foreign travel. The lad who had criticised the University pedants made friends in Paris with Hugo Grotius and in Italy with the wisest Italians of that gloomy period. Even where Galileo then languished a prisoner, Milton would not hold his peace when his religious views were called in question. Indeed, his interview with the "Tuscan artist," the sightless victim of ecclesiastical tyranny, made him the more eager to preserve the envied liberty of England from the reign of "thorough," begun by Land and Strafford, and supported by King Charles and his intriguing queen.

Galileo was then in his seventy-fifth year, old, blind, bereft of his beloved daughter, yet indomitably determined to defy his persecutors with the last and greatest of his dialogues, that upon the New Sciences.

Did the young poet, rejoicing in the vigor of early manhood, have some foreboding of his own destiny as he looked upon those rugged features and talked with the sightless "Columbus of the skies?" Did he feel the darkness gathering about his own head, and the prison walls enclosing him, and see in the ministries of Galileo's pupils the one remaining comfort of his own last days? Galileo had two daughters, one of whom was sour, peevish, morose, and

selfish, the other a ministering angel while she lived, and more than ministering angel: a companion for her father's mind, the greatest then blazing in all earth's galaxy; but a companion taken from him all too soon, though still "calling to him continually." Milton was to have three daughters, of whom one only should be any comfort to him, and she rather in love and good intention than in intellectual sympathy. Did Milton hear from Galileo's own lips the story of that strange retraction, not yet wholly free from mystery, and did he swear on hearing it never to fling a stone at the wonderful old man, who was even then redeeming his defeat and revenging his humiliation by the defiant publication of the principles that underlie our modern dynamics, and now flash their splendor to us from every triumph of modern engineering? I never read Milton's allusions to Galileo in his prose and in his poetry without a vision of that meeting: the last of the giants of the older Italy, the herald of an intellectual method that was to change the face of the world and transform the reasoning of mankind; and the last of the Elizabethan poets, the one born out of due time, as he himself declared, but destined to compose a poem of enduring sublimity, and to live a poem of heroic and thrilling majesty.

Perhaps the noblest passage in Schiller's *Don Carlos* is that in which the Queen begs Posa to tell the Prince to reverence the ideals of his youth. Ah me! How few of us attain to it! In the dire struggle

for existence, in the rush of competition, tempted by avarice or ambition or the pride of life, weakened by strife or by the persuasions of timid friends, the ideals that charmed us in the golden dawn fade away like the splendors of the morning, returning at dusk only as reminders of what we might have been.

John Milton stands forever in the history of English politics and of English literature as a man who revered in mature manhood and in age the ideals of his youth, "never 'bating jot of heart of hope, but steering right onward." I shall not defend him from the charges made against him, some — and the most — of which are false and foolish, and many of which betray a signal ignorance of his writings, of his history, and of the age and the England in which he lived. In Italy he might have written a masterpiece of controversy like Galileo's *Saggiatore*; in France he might have written letters like Pascal's *Provincials*; in England he used the club of Hercules, not the stiletto of the Italian master, or like the wonderful French genius, the shafts of merciless ridicule and the flaming sword of an angry archangel.

True to his ideals, he looked with foreboding at Cromwell's encroachments upon liberty, warning whilst praising him, and he closed his defense of the people of England with these courageous words: "If, as you have been valiant in war, you should grow debauched in peace, you that have had such



visible demonstrations of the goodness of God to yourselves and of his wrath to your enemies; if it should fall out that you have not learned by so ancient an example before your eyes to fear God and work righteousness; — then for my part I shall easily grant and confess (for I cannot deny it) whatever ill man may speak or think of you to be very true. And you will find in a little time that God's displeasure against you will be greater than it has been against your adversaries, greater than his grace and favour have been to yourselves, which you have had larger experience of than any other nation under heaven." "Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour," and writing for America!

"No one," wrote Milton, "ever saw me going about, no one ever saw me asking anything among my friends, or stationed at the doors of the court with a petitioner's face or haunting the entries of lesser assemblies. I kept myself entirely at home, contriving, though burdened with taxes in the main rather oppressive, to lead my frugal life, when lo! Charles' kingdom having been formed into a republic, the Council of State invited me, dreaming of nothing of the sort, to give the use of my services chiefly in foreign affairs." Thus he became Latin Secretary in the new republic, an office which, if not conferred by Cromwell, brought his future panegyrist and intrepid counsellor into close relations with him. But the man that sacrificed his eyes to defend the people of England was not the man to sacrifice his con-

science to any ruler, however powerful. Much as he admired the Protector, he feared and foreboded the downfall of a republic so dependent upon a single overmastering mind. His fears and forebodings soon turned to facts. There were, upon Cromwell's death, among England's five millions, not men enough to save it from the returning Stuarts. Puritanism, as Milton foresaw and foretold, had made itself hateful by political and social tyranny; even Cromwell came to see before his death that Puritanism "had missed its aim." Intellectual forces abounded; they were soon to appear, not so much in poets like Butler and Dryden, or in statesmen like Clarendon, but in the Royal Society, and afterwards in Isaac Newton. Bacon's skepticism, amplified and emboldened, would assert itself in Thomas Hobbes, his favorite secretary, and theology was to give place to the New Philosophy, "which from the times of Galileo at Florence and Sir Francis Bacon in England hath been much cultivated in Italy, France, Germany, and other parts abroad, as well as in England." Meanwhile men like Hales and Chillingworth were seeing that the Church of England might possibly be saved by mitigating and simplifying its doctrine, and by a noble comprehension of all who lived a righteous life, thus hoping vainly (as the sequel proved) to gain by tolerance and reason what Milton had vainly hoped to gain by independence. But in one of those spasms which sweep over a nation, all hope of moderation perished. The corpse of Cromwell was torn from its

grave and gibbeted at Tyburn; that of Pym cast out of Westminster Abbey; Howe and Baxter, the ablest preacher and that noblest parish priest in England, were driven from their churches; John Bunyan was sent to Bedford jail while John Milton was imprisoned and impoverished. His sight was gone, but his spirit was unbroken. True, he had yielded to the urging of his friends and gone into hiding when his enemies were hoping to see him carried to Tyburn in a cart. Mr. Masson declares quite truly that there is no greater historical puzzle than the complete escape of Milton from the scaffold after the Restoration. "It was thought a strange omission," wrote Burnet. But to Milton it was no puzzle; it was an act of God, in whom he had put his trust, and who would not see him put to shame. But whither to go and what to do? Home he hardly possessed, for his beloved second wife was dead, and the only one of his three daughters that loved the blind father, the youngest, Deborah, was but nine years old. His great Taskmaster, however, had work for which he had saved him. Already, in 1658, Milton had begun the elaboration of the great poem which he had laid aside when duty called him to sacrifice his strong right arm. He now regained its use. A feebler soul would have succumbed in such surroundings. Evil indeed were the times; his friends dragged to prison or the scaffold; the causes for which he had made his sacrifices lost apparently forever; his old antagonist, the hypocrite Morus, preaching in

London to the King and his courtiers; all the scum of literary England floating to the surface! What an hour for such an undertaking! His "late espoused saint" coming to him in dreams only; his oldest daughters stealing and selling his books to gratify their whims; and his little Deborah trying in vain to keep pace with her great father's rapid mental stride so as to read to him his books of divers tongues. Then, to use his own words,

"Though blind of sight,  
Despised, and thought extinguished quite,  
With inward eyes illuminated,  
His fiery virtue roused  
From under ashes into sudden flame, he like an eagle  
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.  
So virtue given for lost,  
Depressed and overthrown, as seemed,  
Revives, reflowerishes, then vigorous most  
When most unactive deemed,  
And though her body dies, her fame survives."

Robert Louis Stevenson remarked jauntily that we cannot all enjoy *Paradise Lost*. He meant to say that we cannot all or any of us enjoy all of it, any more than we can enjoy all of Dante's *Commedia*, or all of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, or all of Browning's *Ring and the Book*. Poe was nearer right when he contended that every long poem is really a cluster of short ones, *Paradise Lost* being the chief example.

Let me consider three points only, points that have to do with Milton's character. First, the frequent objection that Satan is the hero of the poem. Of course he is. Why not? The essence of tragedy, as every great dramatist from Æschylus to Ibsen has perceived, lies in wrong-doing, the righteous sufferers being victims always of another's unrighteousness, whether, as in *Prometheus Bound*, the wrong-doer be Zeus himself, or, as in the *Agamemnon*, all are wrong in different degree. Now, Milton at first intended to compose a tragedy. The ancient story and his own defect of dramatic power made that seem unwise. But the tragic elements in the story of the fall of Lucifer and of Adam filled his mind; the study of Shakespeare, especially of the characters of Wolsey and of Lady Macbeth, had revealed to him quite early the havoc wrought in great natures by ambition; while the career of his great contemporary Strafford had shown him a colossal character ruined by greed and pride, and wanton use of giant strength. Wolsey's "Cromwell, I charge thee fling away ambition, by that sin fell the angels," might be taken as his text.

Wolsey's wail, "If I had served my God with half the zeal I served my king, he would not in mine age have left me naked to mine enemies," made Milton doubt his other saying that when he fell "he fell like Lucifer." Strafford, however, whose trial Milton must have followed spellbound, — Strafford, indeed, resembled an archangel ruined, witness his

fascination for every historian of that momentous period. Not Pym, not Hampden, not even Cromwell, stirs us as does the haughty, brilliant, mentally massive, upward-climbing Wentworth, struggling in heroic splendor to avert his doom. I never recall the famous passage,

“Thrice he essayed, and thrice in spite of scorn.  
Tears such as Angels weep burst forth,”

without a vision of Strafford in the presence of his judges, he, too, in spite of scorn, helpless to check the gushing tears that wet his iron cheeks. Precisely here lay all the tragedy to Milton, that men like Wolsey and Bacon and Strafford should rank with the apostates. His scorn for Belial and for Mammon, the one “who seemed composed for dignity and high exploit, though all was false and hollow,” the other expecting to find even in the desert-soil of hell gems and gold, and expecting to exercise angelic skill and art in raising even there magnificence;—Milton’s scorn for both of them gleams and stabs like lightning in the words of Beelzebub, “than whom, Satan except, none higher sate; who stood with Atlantean shoulders fit to bear the weight of mightiest monarchies.” Milton felt his own kinship with these colossal spirits, together with his abhorrence at their apostasy. That weaklings should go wrong in great affairs matters little; but when giants waste their strength against the eternal

laws, and thereby involve the living and the yet unborn in misery, then these laws of God must be followed to their final consequence, never even in Holy Writ more terribly depicted than in those words of Satan, whose accompanying shudder trembles through all the regions of despair:

“Whither I go is hell; myself am hell!”

We moderns chuckle fondly as ghosts and devils and the damned fade from the imagination — as though there vanished with them the decrees of God — and so we fail to read aright our works of genius. The grim button-moulder of the Norwegian dramatist makes us shiver for a moment only with his threat to throw us to the scrap pile, but the merry mood succeeds him soon. Accordingly on every side of us we see colossal powers wasted in daring yet unworthy and diabolical enterprises, and in competition for that bad eminence which ends inevitably in the devastation of all that makes men and angels sons of God.

Again, it is this hatred of evil that discolours Milton's image of the deity. To be sure, the harsher features of the medieval theology had not been softened in the bitter doctrinal conflicts of the seventeenth century, while the framework chosen by the poet for his epic, the story of the fall, compelled him to attempt the impossible and miss. For in his treatise upon Christian Doctrine, he declared that to

the finite mind God must be forever incomprehensible. But there was in Milton none of that jaunty, jesting, sympathy with the incorrigible wrong-doer that inspired Burns in his farewell to Auld Nickie Ben, and made him "wae to think upon yon den e'en for his sake." Milton, on the contrary, was glad to think upon "yon den"; and his joy seemed to him but a drop from the overflow of God's delight in the condign punishment of evil-doers.

Nothing in Dante's *Inferno* is more terrible than the picture of Satan returning triumphantly from Eden and standing expectant of the universal shout and high applause to fill his ear; when contrary, he hears on all sides from innumerable tongues a dismal universal hiss, the sound of public scorn.

"His arms clung to his ribs, his legs intertwining  
Each other, till supplanted down he fell  
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,  
Reluctant, but in vain, a greater power  
Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd.  
According to his doom; he would have spoke,  
But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue  
To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd  
Alike, to serpents all as accessories  
To his bold riot."

"Punish'd in the shape he sinn'd!" There was the lesson learned from Dante. And the power displayed in the description is no greater than the poet's



exultation, which he believes himself to share with God and all his loyal angels.

And yet, our milder conceptions of deity have given us nothing lovelier, and nothing wiser, than the words of Adam persuading Eve to penitence:

“He will instruct us praying, and of grace  
Beseeching him . . .

What better can we do, than to the place  
Repairing where he judg’d us, prostrate fall  
Before him reverent, and there confess  
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears

Undoubtedly he will relent and turn  
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,  
*When angry most he seem’d, and most severe,*  
What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?”

Or having these milder conceptions given us anything nobler than the lament of Adam for the lost epiphanies of God and the benignant reply of the Archangel so sweet with truth and comfort?

“On this mount he appear’d, under this tree  
Stood visible, among these pines his voice  
I heard, here with him at this fountain talk’d.”

This is the voice of humanity yearning for the great companion; the voice of Schiller lamenting

the vanished gods of Greece, the voice of Musset crying in the October night for God to bow the heavens and come down, the voice of Leopardi scanning in vain the Orient sky for tokens of His presence, the voice of Wordsworth complaining:

“Great God! I’d rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.”

But what says Michael, with regard benign?

“Adam, thou know’st heav’n His, and all the earth,  
Not this rock only; His omnipresence fills  
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,  
Fomented by His virtual pow’r and warm’d:

. . . . .  
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain  
God is as here, and will be found alike  
Present, and of His presence many a sign  
Still following thee, still compassing thee round  
With goodness and paternal love.”

And finally, how inane are the gibes so often flung at the converse of Adam and Eve in Paradise! For the nobler gentlewomen of the seventeenth century that Milton knew, English and Italian alike,

spoke a language far more stately than that of our fluent and often flippant dames and maidens. Even Romeo and Juliet hardly talked like modern sweet-hearts. How, in sooth, were the parents of all the living to address each other? Was Adam to greet Eve with some such song as Herrick's Cherry Ripe?

“Cherry ripe, ripe, ripe, I cry.  
If so be you ask me where  
They do grow, I answer, there  
Where my Eva's lips doe smile,  
There's the land or cherry isle  
Whose plantations fully show  
All the year where cherries grow.”

And was Eve to reply, as Dryden made her reply in his never-acted opera, the State of Innocence, in which he “tagged Milton's verses” and sullied them with an impure fancy? Shall we chide the poet who made the mother of all the living speak with the gracious dignity of Vittoria Colonna, or of Margaret Roper, the charming child of Sir Thomas More? Were our first parents in their innocence to indulge in raptures of self-abandon rather than to face each other in the joy of chaste surprise?

Consider the stupendous difficulty of Milton's task. An adult pair with no experience of childhood; without society except each other; with naught to talk about until they fell, except the flowers and the fruits, and the creatures of the garden, and the aspects of earth and sky, and the walks and talks

with their creator. Milton could not pour the riches of his vast and varied knowledge into their speech; he shows his power by its utter absence. He would have made their conversation ludicrous and himself a laughing-stock by freighting it with anachronisms and allusions to things beyond their ken.

Nor are the critics either very subtle or very profound who discover in these scenes the persistent shadow of Mary Powell, Milton's truant wife, and his supposed notions of woman's inferiority. Indeed, Milton's conception of the conjugal relation here illustrated is nobler than any to be found, not merely in contemporary English, but in contemporary European literature. How mean is the Adam of the Bible story! How tame and cowardly are his recorded words! "The woman thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." But Milton endows Adam with his own fine courage, and a self-sacrifice that verges towards the sublime. Adam disobeys, indeed, but disobeys, not for knowledge: he disobeys for love!

"With thee  
 Certain my resolution is to die;  
 How can I live without thee, how forego  
 Thy sweet converse and love so dearly join'd,  
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn?  
 Should God create another Eve, . . . .  
 . . . . yet loss of thee  
 Would never from my heart: No! No! I feel

The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,  
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state  
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."

The notion that the wife should be the husband's slave, so universal in the seventeenth century, has by no means disappeared in the twentieth. But Milton, rejecting the absurd belief that every woman is inferior to any man, boldly affirmed that whenever the wife proved superior, she ought to bear rule according to the law of nature that subjects the lower to the higher being. No! Eve is not the illustration of a thesis; to be depicted at all she must be depicted within the limit of the ancient story. Neither is she Mary Powell. Happy indeed had Milton been, if Mary Powell had been another Eve, for then she would have inspired in him a love like that which triumphed in the Garden. Then, like Adam, he might have found in her that which

"Argued in her something more sublime  
And excellent than what her mind contemned."

Unfortunately for him, there was in his first wife no such fathomless depth of affection as Eve disclosed when about to leave the places that she loved.

"But now lead me on;  
In me is no delay; with thee to go  
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay

Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me  
Art all things under Heaven, all places thou  
Who for my wilful crime art banished hence."

Nor was it any recollection of Mary Powell that inspired the picture of love triumphant amid the havoc of wrong-doing, so touching in its quiet beauty, with which the poem closes.

"Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon;  
The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide,  
They hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow  
Through Eden took their solitary way."

Do you remember the music of the eighth book's opening lines?

"The angel ended, and in Adam's ear  
So charming left his voice, that he awhile  
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear."

Dryden, Addison, Wordsworth, thought Milton still speaking, and each of them stood fixed to hear.

"Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour!" was Wordsworth's invocation, and it befits every time that needs a voice whose sound is like the sea that can be heard afar. If, then, I have chosen to write rather of the architect than of his work, it is

because Milton stood for every ideal that we in America are called to realize. He stood for a republic, in which the wisest and best should rule; he stood for a free church in a free state, for sane and rapid methods of education, for unchecked research and liberty of speech, for pure literature and noble art, for the people and not for irresponsible rulers or privileged classes, for the laws of God to which all constitutions and statutes must conform, for sublimity of life, for righteousness of conduct, for that universal and mild monarchy that shall put an end to every earthly tyranny. For these he stood, for these he fought undauntedly, and at the last alone. "I was ever a fighter," sings Mr. Browning. Grant it freely. But when I contrast the blind Samson of the Revolution and the Restoration with the elegant poet of the Victorian age, I cannot be altogether deaf to a touch of brag in Browning's words. That strong right arm of John Milton held useless behind his back while with the left he fights his battles, those beautiful but sightless eyes, all "knowledge at one entrance quite shut out," — they are the marks of the greatest literary fighter in English history, a fighter never more wonderful and never more triumphant than when he organized his mightiest victory, his immortal poem, from the wreck of a republic and the ruin of his hopes.







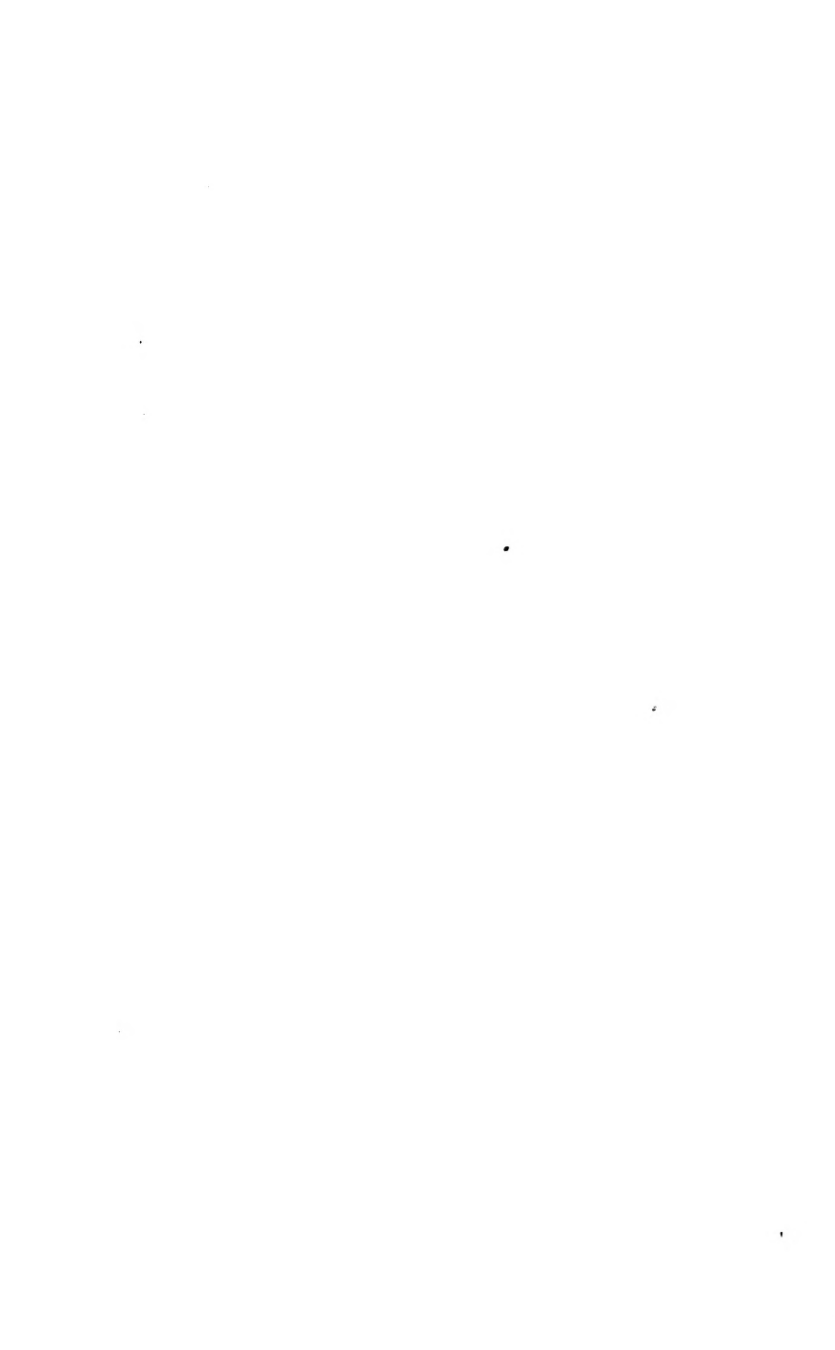
























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